ZERO

GAMES ST AMIGA PC CONSOLES | DECEMBER ISSUE | £2.70 WITH DISK



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- **B** Cry "20 seconds to comply" and wave your arms about?
- **C** Cast a spell of 'disk regeneration'?

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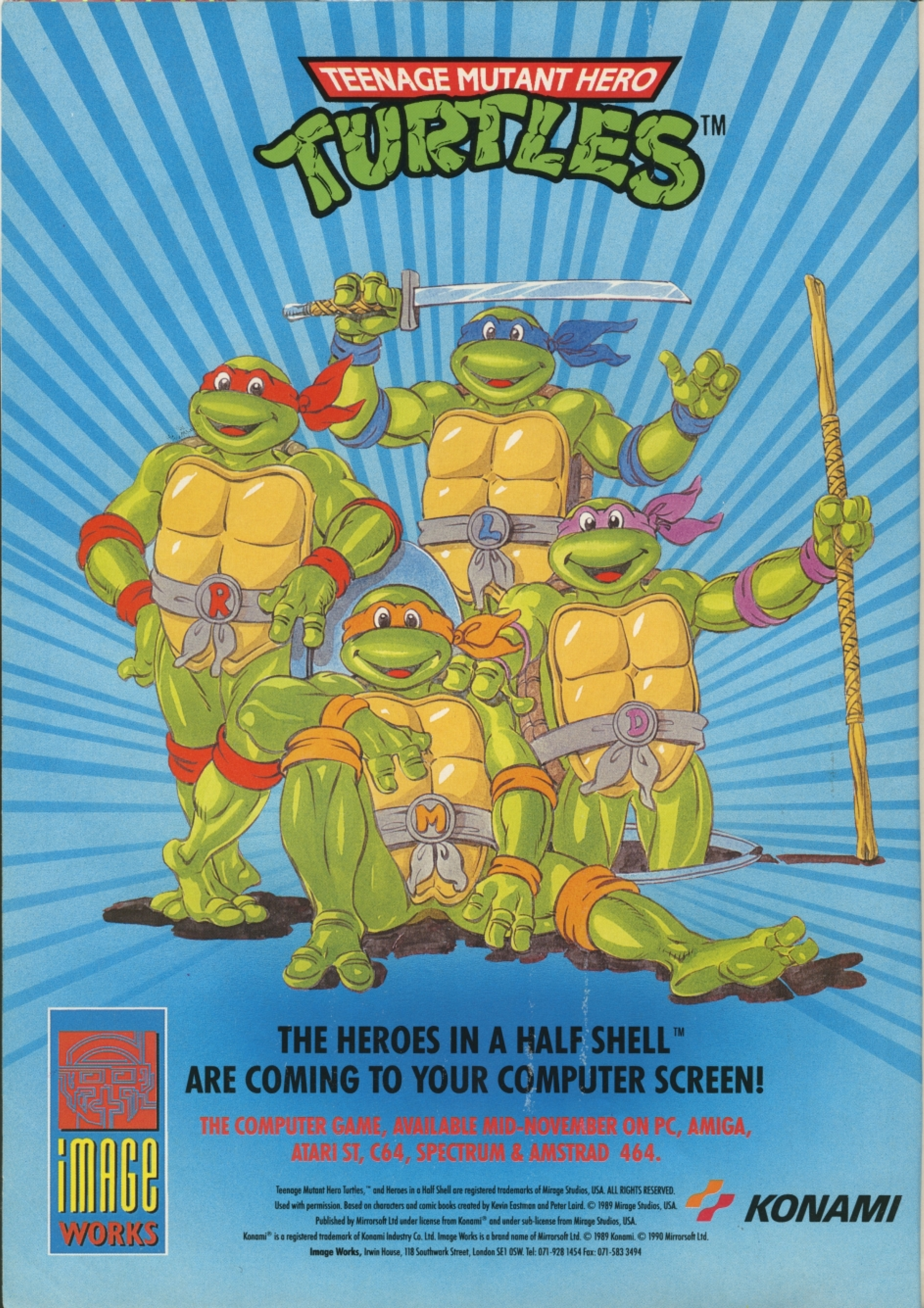
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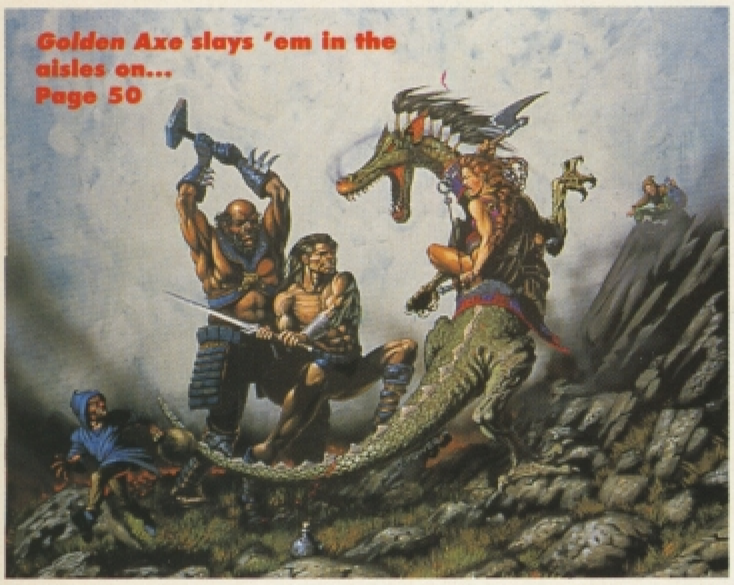


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ZERO 14


Is is Prawn Connery? No, it's James Pond. Page 67


Golden Axe slays 'em in the aisles on... Page 50


Phew! What a planet sized scoop! It's the Sim Earth review. Page 38


I say, cabbage crates over the conning tower, what?! Page 62

GAMES LIST
Just the job for lazy old gits like you!

REVIEWS

PREVIEWS

ZERO
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Oi!

RUMOURS

In a shock announcement, Bullfrog has revealed it is to split with Electronic Arts, publisher of its previous hit games, including *Populous, Flood* and more recently *Powermonger*. There is widespread speculation that Bullfrog is to follow the Bitmaps in joining new-style publisher Renegade.

ACCLAIM TAKES AN EARLY BART

Acclaim, possibly the most successful publisher of Nintendo games in America, is coming to Britain. What's more, the firm looks certain to bring *The Simpsons* along with it as its opening offering. If you live near either of the people who possess a Sky satellite dish, you'll be familiar with this new anarchic American cartoon. Well, Acclaim has already signed up the rights to the cult series and could release the game for Nintendo in the UK when it sets up shop over here in the New Year.

Acclaim boss Greg Fishbach told ZERO, however, that the NES is the only format his company is interested in and that ST, Amiga and PC rights would be passed on to another firm, probably Ocean.



NUEVA AMIGA, AMIGOS!

Commodore has unveiled a new variation on its Amiga theme, the A1500. The new 1.5 Mb machine is supposed to plug the gap between users who just want a pure games machine and those who take their computing a bit more seriously. It comes with a pretty hefty £999 price tag but for your money you get a bundle including *Populous, Sim City, Battle Chess, Their Finest Hour, Deluxe Paint III, Platinum Works* and an A1084S colour, stereo monitor.

US GOLDFATHER
PARTS ONE AND TWO

Leading software house US Gold will be making you an offer you can't refuse early in 1991. The firm has delved into the gangster underworld and come out with the rather tasty *Godfather* licence, giving it the rights to the legendary first two films and also the long awaited *Godfather III* which is due out next March.

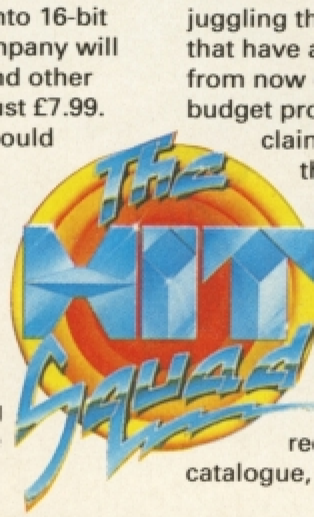
U.S. Gold is actually promising two versions of *The Godfather* in a bit of an Ocean *Nightbreed* style – one being an interactive adventure and the other being a more basic shoot 'em up.



BUDGET PRICE BATTLE

Ocean has announced full details of its Hit Squad move into 16-bit budget games. The company will be releasing bits of its own and other people's back-catalogues at just £7.99. A first batch of seven titles should be appearing any time now – these consisting of *Wizball, Batman The Caped Crusader, Arkanoid II, R-Type, Super Hang-On, Afterburner* and *Last Ninja II*. From then on two releases will be following every month.

Within minutes of hearing about Ocean's plans, both the Codemasters and Virgin Mastertronic's 16 Blitz label started juggling their prices. Other than games that have already been released at £4.99, from now on all Codemasters 16-bit budget product will sell at £6.99. The firm claims that the price move means that games can be better quality. 16 Blitz, meanwhile, hasn't totally given up on £4.99 games – some will still appear. But its licence re-releases lined up for Christmas – such as *Double Dragon* – will cost £7.99. And PC titles, such as the recently acquired Infocom back-catalogue, will cost £9.99.



ON THE GRAPEVINE

● Now that MicroProse's **Gunship** has reached the grand old age of four, the Tetbury sim supremos are currently working on a project they've codenamed 'Gunship 2000'. Although this is just a working title, the idea is to present a flight model for a helicopter from the year 2000. The missions seem to be shaping up as various raids against Columbian drug barons and the like. The project should be previewed at the European Computer Trade Show this Spring, but expect the PC version to ship in July '91.

● Fans of **Damocles** may be over the (nineteen) moons of Eris to hear that Novagen is planning to release a mission disk. Hurrah! Expect to see it, erm... about now actually.

● Fans of **Corporation** may be over the UCC building to hear that Core Design is planning a 16 level data disk to append to its chart topping first title. Expect the Amiga disk first in November.

● Fans of **Every Second Counts** may be a tad disappointed to hear that Grapevine thinks Paul Daniels is a short balding git with an irritating accent.

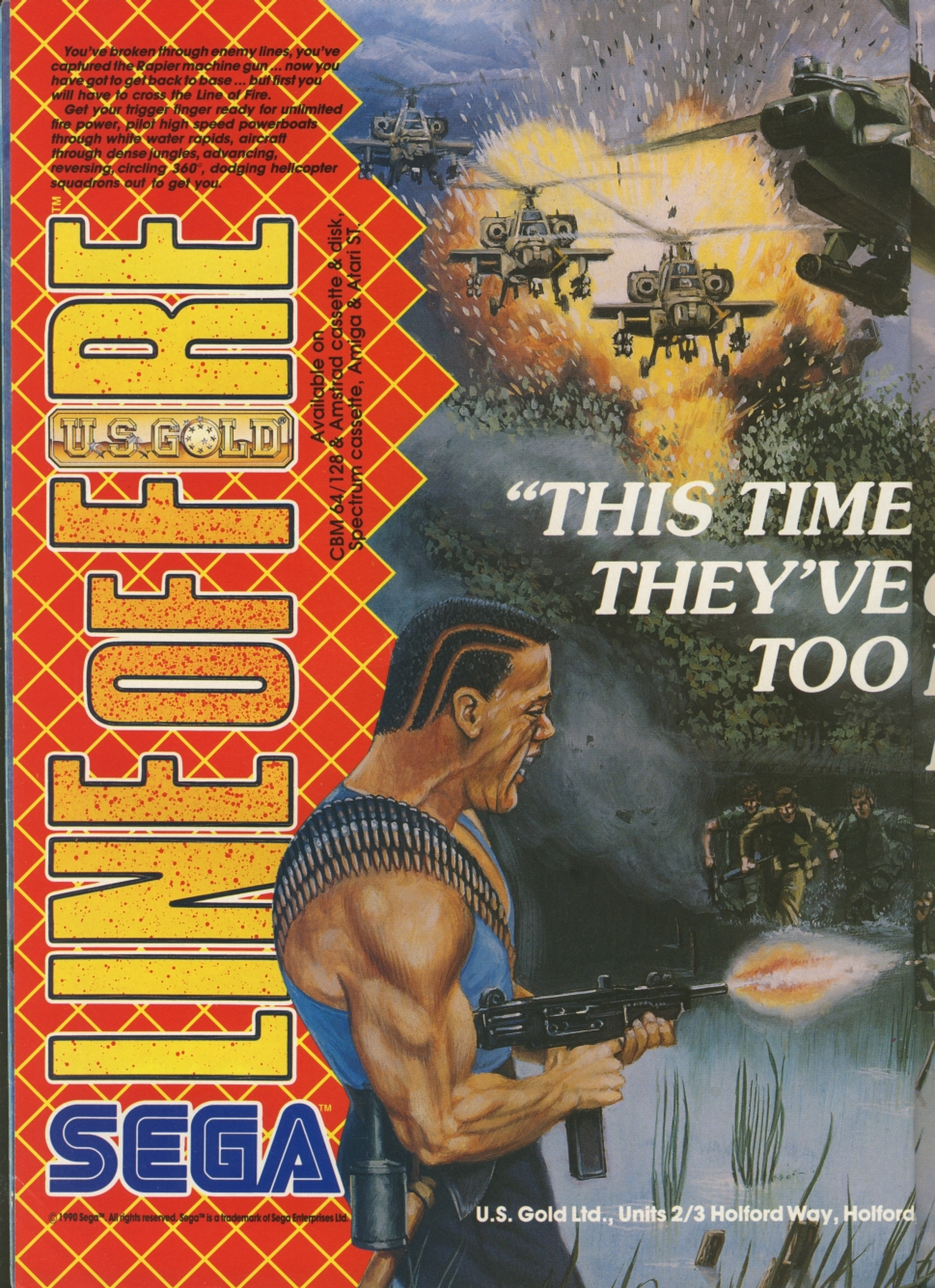
● Mindscape has two exciting new games on the horizon scheduled for release (on PC initially) almost as you read this. The first is the licence of the award-winning German TV movie, **Das Boot** – a nail-bitingly atmospheric recreation of life on a U-Boat during World War II. The other title is not only another licence, but also another WWI flying game. Expect to see **Blue Max** on PC first, but ST and Amiga versions (of both games) are planned to follow.

● Oh and talking about flight sims, Activision has a couple up its troubled sleeve. **F-14 Tomcat** is being brought in from Activision US and claims to be 'accurate enough for the expert, simple enough for the novice'. Hopefully this doesn't mean it'll be as dreadful as Epyx's **Snow Strike**. Erm.. okay, well how about **Death Or Glory**? We've seen a sneak demo and rather impressive it looked too. Basically **D.O.G.** is a universal flight sim taking you from the dawn of air combat to the present day. Pilot a Sopwith camel over the Western Front, fly an F-86 Sabre over Korea, fly a Stealth Fighter over Milton Keynes. Then if you get bored try the 'What if?' option where you can take on a squadron of F-117A's in a Sopwith Camel. **D.O.G.** is being programmed by Leed's based Vektor Graphics for Mediagenic in the States. It'll then re-emerge on this side of the 'pond' sometime in March across all formats.

● US Gold has announced that it has officially procured publishing rights for all future SEGA coin-op conversions. Expect to see such arcade hits as **G-Lock** and **Super Monaco GP** early next year.



Oi! compiled by Stuart Dinsey and Dave Roberts



You've broken through enemy lines, you've captured the Rapier machine gun ... now you have got to get back to base ... but first you will have to cross the Line of Fire.
Get your trigger finger ready for unlimited fire power, pilot high speed powerboats through white water rapids, aircraft through dense jungles, advancing, reversing, circling 360°, dodging helicopter squadrons out to get you.
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GONE
DAMNED
FAR!"
Use your Rapier machine gun to blast your way through enemy lines ... mega devastation with a single button.
The other operations were Sunday picnics compared with this one.
Getting in was tough – getting out alive will be damned near impossible!
Line of Fire – 'This time they've gone too damned far!'
L.O.F L.O.F
L.O.F
DAMAGE
DAMAGE
DAMAGE
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ESCAPE MAP
Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.
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IT'S ALL T

We've done it again. None of this 'Call it a game and give you a demo' nonsense. With ZERO you get a complete no-messing-about fully working game. (And a pretty good one at that.) *And* a playable demo. It's the business. It's the best!

RAMPAGE

Activision/Complete Game



All this mayhem and destruction and not a Chewit in sight.

Scary monsters and super creeps! Remember all those classic *Godzilla* and *King Kong* films (and the old *Chewits* advert)? Badly photographed plastic models destroying cardboard scenery? Their opponents weren't impressive – all clean-shaven with huge square chins and boring hair cuts (and the men weren't much cop either). The monsters were easily the most attractive things on the screen. Which is why *Rampage* gives you the chance to play the beast. As King Kong, Godzilla or Wolf-man (or George, Lizzie and Ralph to give them their off-stage names) you get to punch, crunch and generally monster-mash your way round 50 American cities, causing anarchy wherever you go and getting your picture in the paper to boot.

Each town you visit consists of tower blocks, cars, helicopters and victims (heh, heh, heh). Climbing up buildings and punching them will bring them crumbling to the ground. (Make sure you're not still on the building when it collapses.) Before demolishing a building a few well placed punches will enable you to nosh on the occupants.

Extra points can also be picked up by crushing any cars, helicopters, tanks or pedestrians that you come across. If you're a particularly mean monster you can even give your mates a quick biff on the (King) conk. Of course they can do the same thing to you. If you're hit too often (or spend too long hanging onto falling masonry) you'll find yourself sinking back to embryo form and shuffling off the screen. If you can avoid being eaten on your way, then pressing fire will see you helicoptered back into the middle of the fun.

CONTROLS

After the title screen comes up press the space bar. Now use F1, F2 and F3 to select the control system for each monster. Pressing F1 scrolls through Keyboard/Joystick 1/Joystick 2/Computer/Not Activated for the first monster, F2 for the second, F... Well, you get the idea.

WITHOUT FIRE BUTTON

Joystick up: Monster climbs onto the side of the building (provided he's next to it).
Joystick left: Monster moves left.
Joystick right: Monster moves right.
Joystick down: Monster climbs down building.

WITH FIRE BUTTON

Joystick up: Monster punches up.
Joystick left: Monster punches or grabs left.
Joystick right: Monster punches or grabs right.
Joystick down: Monster punches diagonally down.

Pressing the fire button alone makes the monster jump. (Very useful for getting off buildings in a hurry.)

If you're using keyboard controls, then the cursor keys correspond to the direction of the joystick, the shift button corresponds to fire.

HINT: The most effective way of destroying a building is to climb onto the side, then go down punching diagonally.

A PC OF CAKE

Because of the usual shortage of disk space and concomitant technical problems, we are unable to offer a PC version of this month's cover disk. So, as compensation, here's a spiffing money-off voucher for a PC game from those generous bods at MicroProse.
Here's the deal:

PC Game	M.R.P	ZERO Price
Stunt Car Racer	£24.99	£19.99
Midwinter	£29.99	£24.99
International Soccer Challenge	£24.99	£19.99

All you have to do to snap up one of these bargs is send this special £5 off voucher with a cheque/postal order for £19.99/£24.99 (depending on the game chosen) to:
MicroProse/ZERO PC Offer,
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Hampton Road Industrial Estate,
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Please allow 28 days for delivery. This voucher is redeemable only for one of the three games listed above, specified on PC format only.

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HE RAMPAGE!

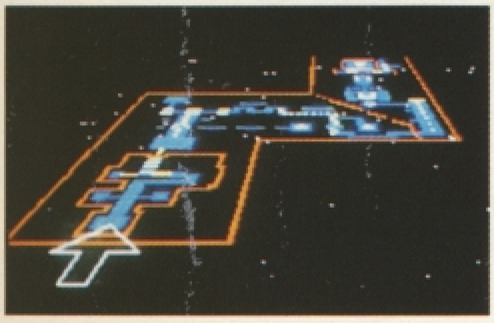
SIMULCRA

MicroProse/Playable Demo

If you want to read 'The David Wilson Alternative Scenario' for this game then turn to *Deja Vus* on page 109. For the less eccentric amongst you, the object of *Simulcra* is to dismantle the force field that encircles your base. (Well, it's not so much a base, more a sort of large platform really, but with mortgage rates being what they are you have to take what you can get.) To dismantle the force field you must shoot out the revolving generators and the (non-revolving) pylons which are littered round the platform.

As well as pylons and generators there are aliens. Lots of aliens. Aliens in front of you. Aliens behind you. Aliens above you. Aliens all over the shop. Shooting these aliens not only turns them into little bits of rubble but also releases Pluspods which, when bumped into, provide you with bonus rockets, fuel and the like. Occasionally you come across a barn-like building. Shooting this reveals a small version of yourself. Run into it for a bonus life.

In one way your platform is not dissimilar to the channel tunnel: it's not been finished. Every now and again you



An arrow! Maybe that's the way out.

come across gaps which you need to cross. Fortunately, you have wings. Lovely wings. Colourful wings. Vulnerable wings. *(Stop being so bleedin' poetic. Alf Garnet.)* These wings can be opened for flying and retracted when you're safely landed. If you don't withdraw them quickly enough you're likely to have them shot off, perhaps leaving you stranded on some isolated platform. Then, if flight is really essential, you have to trade in all your armour for a new set of wings. The problem is it's a one-way-only trade. You can't trade in your wings for new armour, so once you're flying again you'll be about as safe as a three-legged tortoise trying to cross the M1.

CONTROLS

Joystick left: Turn left.
Joystick right: Turn right. (Are you beginning to notice a pattern?)
Joystick forward: Accelerate forward (or move down if flying).
Joystick back: Move backwards (if wings in). Take off (if wings out and forward speed is sufficient). Fly up (if flying).
Tap fire button: Fire laser.
Hold down fire button: Fire missile (If you have any).

KEYS

F1: Local map (if you've picked up RAD PlusPod).
F2: Overall map.
F3: Electronic Counter Measure (if you've picked up ECM Pluspod).
F4: Wings in/out.
F5: Take off or (if wings destroyed) trade-off shields for wings.
Help: Pause.

PLUSPODS

Pluspods often flash up their initials to show what they contain. Here's a quick glossary of what's what in the world of initials. Oh and be warned – a Pluspod is like a politician's smile. It soon disappears.

SU: Speed up. Increases your speed. (There's a strange logic to that.)
RAD: Radar. Activates the local map facility.
FFG: Fire and Forget Missiles. They've got a lot more bite then a laser shandy. Hold down fire button to launch.
TAD: Target and Display. A red lock on sight, makes hitting things with your FFGs a piece of... er jam roly poly.
BAT: Replenishes your shield. No idea why it's called BAT. Answers on a postcard please.
ECM: Electronic Counter Measure. Plays hell with enemy missiles.
SFB: Solid Fuel Booster. A sort of mobile fuel pump. Without Solid Fuel you can only glide, not fly.

LOADING

Both ST and Amiga formats auto-boot so simply put the disk in your computer, switch on and wait for results. Once the disk has loaded, select either *Rampage* or *Simulcra*. Then sit back and wait for the action.



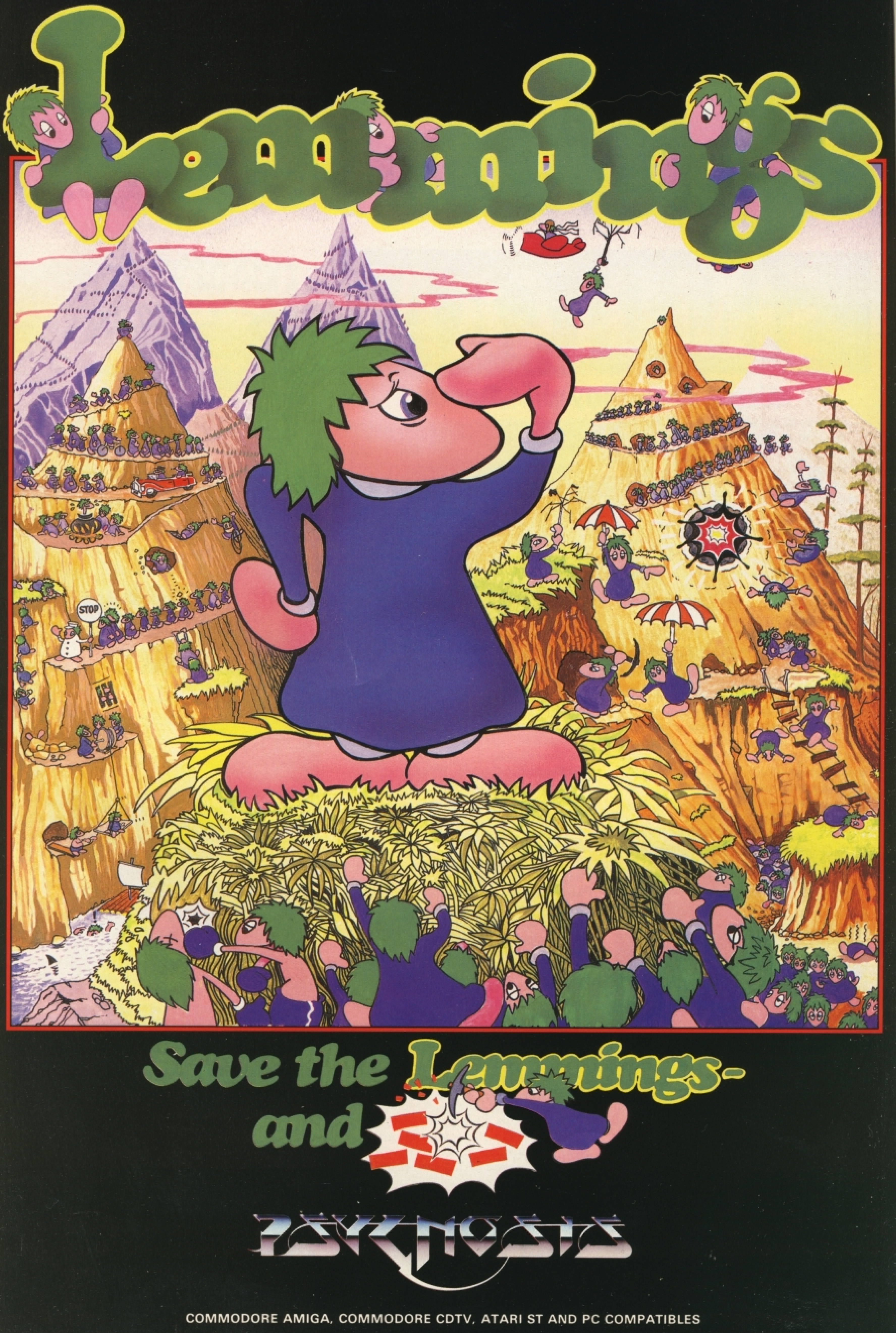
Hmm... not sure that I'm really convinced by these new designer runways.

DISKLEXIA

If you're having probs loading your disk then don't start beating your budgerigar round the head with a rolled up copy of *Flat Fish Monthly*. Instead:

1. Make sure you're loading the disk into your ST or Amiga, *not* your old Spectrum or your Betamax video recorder.
2. Try switching the computer off and rebooting.
3. Swear.
4. If the disk still won't load then put the disk, a note explaining the problem and a stamped self addressed jiffy bag in a bigger jiffy bag. (Since it won't all fit in a smaller one.)
5. Send this little lot to: ZERO Disk Returns, Copytec, Alban House, 24A White Pit Lane, Flackwell Heath, Nr. High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9HR.
6. Start beating your budgerigar round the head with a rolled up copy of *Flat Fish Monthly* while waiting for your spanking new copy of the disk to arrive.

STOP


Lemmings
STOP
Save the Lemmings-
and
PSYGNOSIS
COMMODORE AMIGA, COMMODORE CDTV, ATARI ST AND PC COMPATIBLES

LETTERS

... Anyway, if you can't get the pin out of the feeder valve, then try soaking the whole unit in a mild acid solution. This should do the trick. The casing will then slip off to reveal... Oh, sorry. I was just explaining how to adjust the petrol inflow on a lawnmower. In case you were wondering, this is the serious letters page, where we discuss, among other things, lawnmowers.

SURFIN' USA

In issue 3 you said something about a game called *Silver Surfer*. What's happening with it? Please could you tell me as I'm dying to know. Also when will *Hawk* be coming out for the ST?
Robert Soper, London.

Ahem, yes. Virgin tells us Silver Surfer *is unlikely to appear on 16-bit but it's thought that a version for the Nintendo ES system is being programmed in the US. An embarrassed Electronic Arts person coughed politely and whispered that* Hawk *was unlikely to appear this side of next Easter. By the way, information is money. That'll be 50 pence please.* **Ed.**

BOOT UP THE BUM

I've been looking in my fave mag to see if anyone has written in with the same type of problem as I am experiencing with my ST. As they haven't, I've put pen to paper to see if you wonderful people at ZERO can help.

In July I decided to purchase an external double-sided disk drive so that I could marvel at the great programs that require the above. The problem I am experiencing is that many games that require a double-sided drive are also ones that autoboot from the internal drive. I thought that I had overcome this problem by obtaining a PD program that allows you to autoboot from disk B.

Unfortunately, I find that many commercial programs (e.g. *Rainbow Islands, Dungeon Master*) react with this PD program and will not load.

Could you please tell me if there is an autoboot program that will work with the majority of commercial software or if there is any other way (software or hardware) that I can get round this. Otherwise it would seem that I have purchased a bit of a white elephant.

Finally – a great mag, please don't alter it!
M. Chappell, Clacton On Sea, Essex.

It's likely you'll find problems with most software (this sort of trick is exactly what protection systems are designed to prevent) but without knowing exactly what ST you've got, we can't help much. If you're technically minded, you could try switching the two drives around so your ST thinks drive A is B and vice-versa, but this is a bit dodgy (i.e. I once met a guy in a pub who knew someone whose pet hamster had tried it). And yes, you probably have got a bit of a pink flamingo on your hands. **Ed.**

RAD-ISH

Can you tell me the difference between the *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* game and the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* game, if there is any? Which one is most like the arcade game that I played in Scarborough arcade?
P.S. I think you and your comic are brilliant and cool!
Adam Austain, Scotland.

As we all know, 'Hero Turtles' are shandy drinkers of the first order, about as rad as someone who isn't very rad at all (like Kenneth Baker for instance). They also feature in the official UK 16-bit game – an improvement on the original Amiga import 'Ninja' version (that'll be two grand in used fivers please Mirrorsoft). Neither bear any resemblance to the arcade version. And funnily enough, we haven't been into Scarborough arcade for, um, ages. Spook! **Ed.**

NUDE MAGS ON THE BLOCK

Imagine the scene. Clunk – the letterbox opens. Plop – the envelope drops through the door. Tear – I hastily open the package. Shock, horror, embarrassment – ZERO NUDE! (Without Shorts). Please don't let this debacle happen again.
Disgusted, Darwen, Lancs.

Actually, if you check on page 122, there's a pair of Y-Fronts cleverly concealed behind the Lonely Hearts free ads and disguised as a broken heart. 'Nudity is in the eye of the perv'. **Ed.**

MURRAY MINT

Right, I'm not Swedish, I hate Big Fun, Scooby Doo's great, I like Tintin, I have a Siberian dwarf hamster, I can't stomach whelks, I've got an Amiga, and a Nintendo, it was my birthday fairly recently, I'm 14, I think *Cheers* is brill, I'm crap at *The Lost Patrol*, I don't have asthma, I've never met a nice South African, I think the Poll Tax is a bad idea, I think Thatcher should be shot, I'm not into *Hanky Panky*, or Madonna, and *Paperboy* is one of the best games around. That's me for you. Now. Blimey. I've run out of room.
Ben 'Posh Kid' Murray, Maida Vale, London.

What an interesting life you must lead. Oh, and we're actually brilliant at Lost Patrol, *just thought I'd let you know.* **Ed.**

FLY GUYS

I was thinking that since ZERO is the greatest, funniest magazine in the universe (apart from the *Beano*), I would give you a little tip to double your readership. All you have to do is print this letter as Star letter in your magazine, and my literary brilliance will simply glow from the pages, not only selling ZERO to computer nuts but also as a tanning aid.

Anyway, while I was reading, I noticed that two of your letters came from the RAF. I want to join the RAF. In fact, I only bought my Amiga for *F-29 Retaliator* (what a useless simulation). Will my chances of joining the RAF be increased by having a letter published in ZERO? Would you please send me a T-shirt so I can prove my total loyalty to the Recruitment Officer?
Michael Tipping (Flossy The Super Sheep), Snitterfield, Warwickshire.

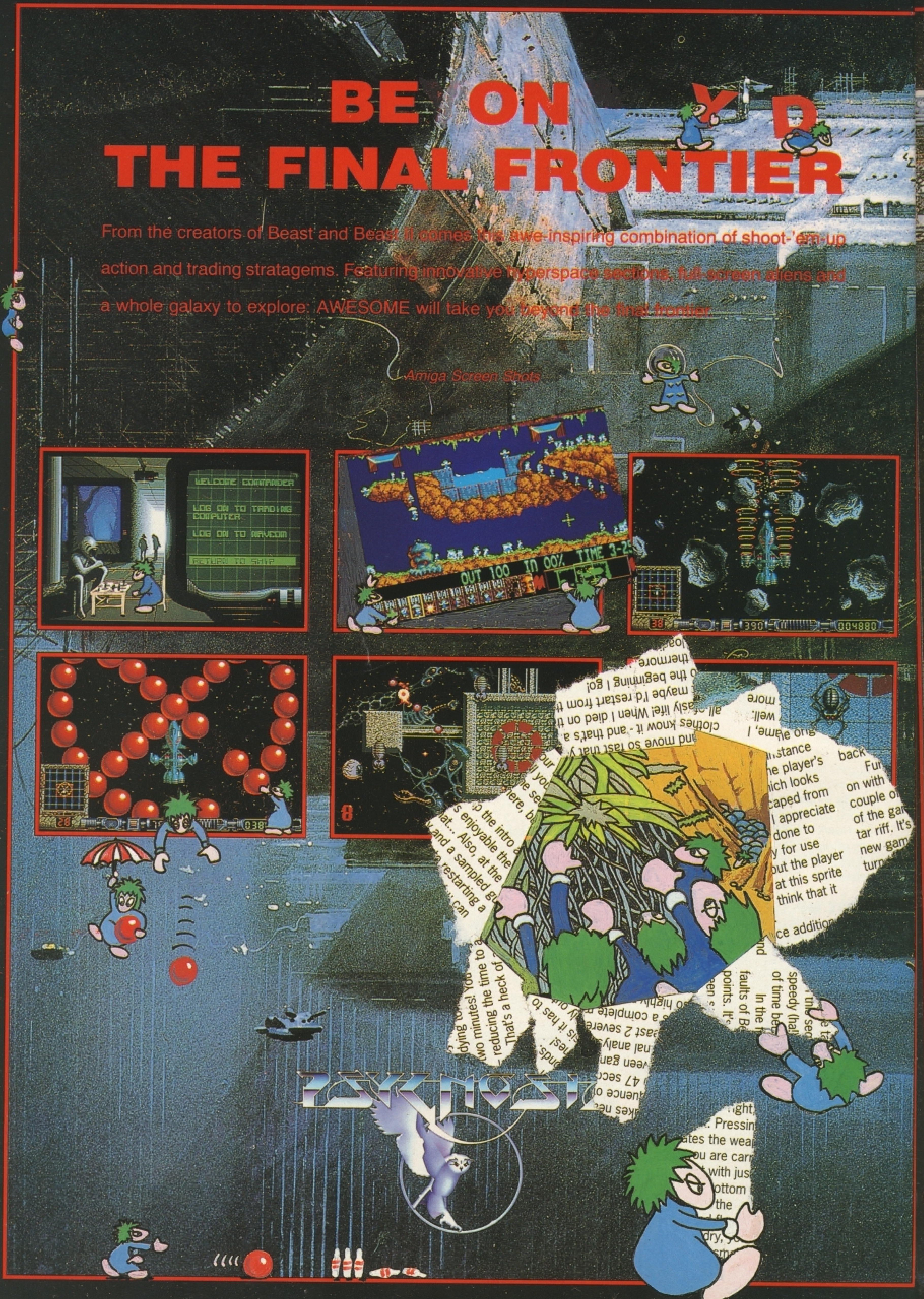
Yes! It's true! Everybody knows that you have to have 20-20 vision to become a fighter pilot, but few people are aware that a complete set of ZERO back issues is also a prerequisite. We asked Air Marshall Smithers (DFC) for a comment. "ZERO... ZERO... ah yes, in the second war, erm, the Japs you know, um... planes made of wood... Mad Dog... the good old days, what?" Thank you Smithers. By the way, I used to live a couple of miles from Snitterfield. Are you sure it's not the Foreign Legion you want? **Ed.**

STOP! THIEF!

A few days ago I walked into WH Smith to buy an issue of ZERO. I managed to find one last issue. However, the cover disk was not attached. I walked up to the counter assuming that they kept the cover disk there. However, it soon became clear that my worst fears had come true. It had been stolen. Tea-leaved, half-inched, pinched, taken or shop-lifted. Why can't the cover disk have a password on it? This password could be printed on the corners of the pages of the magazine so that flipping through the pages you could obtain a 98 character password. This would mean that you would need an intact copy of the magazine to run the cover disk.
Matthew Hanscombe, London.

No good I'm afraid. Someone with a photographic memory could easily remember 98 numbers at a glance. **Ed.**

WRITE TO THE ED, ZERO, 14 RATHBONE PLACE, LONDON, W1P 1DE.
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BEYOND
THE FINAL FRONTIER
From the creators of Beast and Beast II comes this awe-inspiring combination of shoot-'em-up action and trading stratagems. Featuring innovative hyperspace sections, full-screen aliens and a whole galaxy to explore: AWESOME will take you beyond the final frontier.
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UNDER WRAPS

LINE OF FIRE



***Tim Ponting* thinks he's a bit of hot stuff at tight rope walking so we packed him off to US Gold in his asbestos pumps to walk the *Line Of Fire*. Little did he expect a rendezvous with two gun-toting macho muthas!**

WHAT'S WHAT	
TITLE	Line Of Fire
PUBLISHER	US Gold
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	December



Out of building, up trail, along river, down canyon, across... Bored yet?

Birmingham. Yes, it's some where in the middle of England and everyone speaks with an extremely odd accent that sounds as if they've got small pieces of poached egg lodged in their sinuses. And it's where US Gold – publisher of *Line Of Fire* – is based. Well, they're in a place called Holford actually.

Anyway, forget Birmingham – and Holford – because that's not where *Line Of Fire* is being programmed at all. The coin-op conversion is being done by Creative Materials, who are based in Prestwich, Manchester – which is, as you may know, an awfully long way from Birmingham. And Holford. The programmer in charge of the project is Richard Aplin. "Whereabouts do you work, Richard? Bristol? Okay, fine. Bloody great."

***(Deep breath.)* Forget Birmingham, dispel Manchester from your minds completely, *Line Of Fire* is being programmed in Bristol. So it was there that ZERO visited to give you lot a spondicious sneak preview of one of US Gold's contenders for the Christmas number one slot.**

What am I doing in Birmingham then?

Hang on a minute. Richard is in Birmingham too at the moment – spook! *(Maybe it has something to do with an appointment you made? Publisher.)*

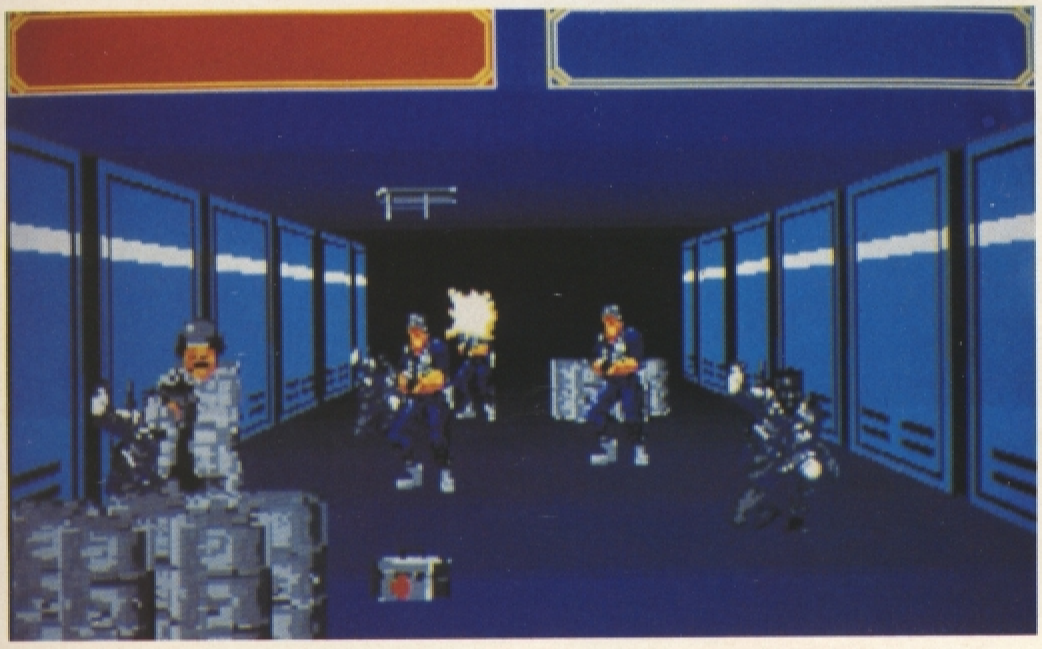
THE SCENARIO

They don't get better than this. "This time they've gone too damn far!" proclaims the press release. They certainly have. A small but active terrorist organisation from Bexhill-on-Sea has designed and developed the Rapier supergun, a cross between an Uzi 9mm and a North Sea oil pipeline. These Middle Eastern pranksters – Bexhill has a large immigrant population – have high-tailed it off to a secret base at an exclusive Gulf holiday resort to plan world domination and an end to *Happy Mondays* videos. Your task is to break into the base with your best chum and steal the gun...

But hold on – unless you're wearing particularly crap contact lenses, it looks like you're standing in the heart of a Middle Eastern terrorist camp with your friend chappy and a supergun under each arm! You've finished the job before you even started! Um, not quite, sorry. You bought a return ticket from Bexhill, see, and you've still got to get home. Which is what *Line Of Fire* is all about...

THE GAME

You may have heard a couple of scurrilous rumours about *Line Of Fire*. That it's another two-player game along the lines of *Operations Wolf* and *Thunderbolt*, completely bereft of any kind of mental input. This is not the case. It's a bit like chess, but played with an extremely large machine gun. Who do you shoot



Just think of double glazing salesmen and pull the trigger...

CLEVER DICK



He certainly is. Richard 'Smartie-pants' Aplin ("Don't call me Alpen, everybody does that") has programmed more games than I've had free lunches off Dennis Publishing. Not that that's difficult. He started life with Virgin in London, where his first game was *Fly Spy* which he programmed for the Amstrad CPC. Euch-pah. He worked on 68000 and CPC versions of *Double Dragon I* and *II*, *Shinobi*... and now with his Creative Materials hat on, he's doing both Amiga and ST versions of *Line Of Fire*.

So it's a bit of a bast, is it Richard? "Actually, there's only one problem really, and that's the sprite scaling." Okay then, why put them in the kettle in the first place?

(Excuse me a moment while I break your legs. Publisher.)

Richard explains painfully that the original coin-op features hardware scaling for the sprites. It means that the coin-op can scroll objects towards you perfectly smoothly, from tiny blobs in the distance till they become massive great blobs in the foreground. "It's difficult to emulate that in software," says Richard. "And there are two Megabytes of graphics in the ROM chips of the coin-op."



So they've had to make a few concessions in the 16-bit versions. There won't be quite as many baddies on screen at any one moment as in the coin-op. And Richard has had to cut down on the number of enemy soldier types.

But one important thing remains: the 3D scrolling. "Each of the sprites' positions are mapped in a sort of cut down polygon mathematics. It's quite straightforward actually." The only place where this isn't the case is in the first level, where the right angled bends in the corridor can't easily be reproduced with the limited number of sprites available for the background. But the rest of the levels chug away happily in all their 3D glory. So there you have it.


RANX
YOUR MOTHER WOULDN'T LIKE IT !
From Rome to New York, psychoplague is taking its victims. The President of the United States, himself, is contaminated. You are Ranx, an android with muscles of steel, and only you can save the world. But, you are being tortured by something even worse. Your friend, Lubna, has disappeared and you want to find her at all costs.
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IT'S A MATERIALS WORLD



Slightly posh Nick Vincent blows the company's first year profits on three pints of Tequila Sunrise.

Line Of Fire is being put together by Creative Materials, the team behind such recent hits as *Rotox* and *Operation Harrier* for US Gold and *Days Of Thunder* for Mindscape. Right, let's take a look at their promotional bumph. Head office in Manchester, yep... ah, a 'satellite of salaried staff in Bristol' – that explains the confusion. Right, this looks interesting...

A SHORT INTERVIEW WITH NICK VINCENT, DIRECTOR, CREATIVE MATERIALS



Happy or wot?

"Our next arcade conversion to come out will be Capcom's *Final Fight*, also for US Gold. We are also working on an original design where you control a character who goes around Manchester beating up people with stupid haircuts wearing ridiculous flares and *Happy Mondays* T-shirts. Fail and you are forced to listen to a *Stone Roses* track, but if you succeed in your mission, the Hacienda is closed down and Tony Wilson is run over by a bus. The game will also insult *The Man From Delmonte*, *The Inspiral Carpets*, *The Charlatans*, *James*, and *Northside*. At least it will if I have anything to do with it." Nick Vincent is also the chairman of *The Committee For The Dissolution Of All Manchester Nouveau Hippy Dance Bands*.

first? Is it the bloke who pops up from behind a barrel in front of you? Or do you go for the geezer running down the corridor towards you? Or perhaps the one who drops down from the hatch in the ceiling? Yep, him. 'Point' the mouse, press the button, blam! Checkmate in, erm, one. Shoot the wrong man and, well... it's checkmate too! So, as you've probably realised, this is a game strictly for 'Mensa' members only.

Absolutely everyone has played the coin-op, but in case you haven't left your bedsit on the island of Yell for the past year, here's the scam. *Line Of Fire* is another one of those cabinets with a couple of Uzis strapped on the front. You and a buddy (that's what you call a friend if you habitually carry a large machine gun around) peer down the barrels and aim streams of leaden death at the numerous targets that flood out of the screen at you. Grunts, jeeps, planes, helicopters, grunts, planes and TV gameshow hosts cavort about as if they've got nothing better to do than get shot to bits.

The clever thing is that unlike its predecessors, the playfield of *LOF* scrolls in 3D. If, for example, you're fleeing down a jungle path acting as tail gunners on the back of a jeep, then as the vehicle turns corners, the play area scrolls in the appropriate direction. It's definitely a bit of a technical nightmare to convert it to 16-bit – but then that's why programmers are programmers and not bus conductors, isn't it?

In order to get through the mayhem, you're armed with plain bullets (left mouse button) and the special grenade launcher itself, which wipes out an entire screenful of baddies (on the right button). There's also a map which appears between sections showing how far you've got to go. Before you embark on a level, a round window zooms out at you with a picture of a jeep getting blown up, that sort of thing. Just to let you know you're probably going to die horribly in the very near future.

GUESS THE NUMBER OF LEVELS COMPO



If you can tell us how many levels there are in *Line Of Fire*, you could win this amazing exclusive *LOF* cut-out-and-stick-on-with-Uhu badge. Write your answer down here:

I think there are ☐ levels in *Line Of Fire*.

● All the normal rules apply. The answer will be published shortly.



A formation helicopter team inflict serious damage on our heroes.

THE EIGHT LEVELS

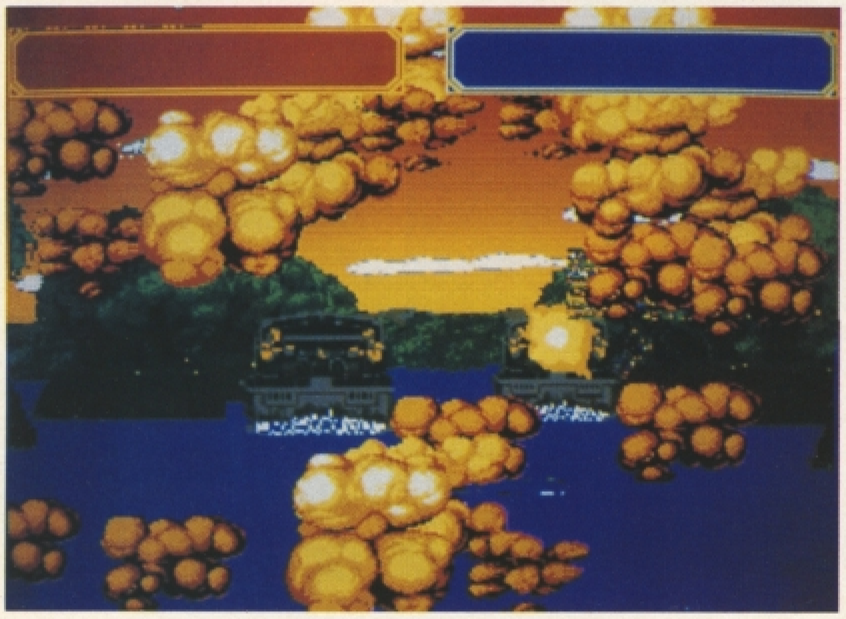
Did you get it right? Never mind, you can have the badge anyway. The game begins the moment after you've nicked the supergun. You're in the terrorist's complex and have to escape down an extremely long corridor. Some inconsiderate bast has left millions of obstacles lying around behind which shelter hordes of terrorists, all with but one thought: "If you don't give me that gun back, I'm going to phone the Ayatollah and make sure you never write a book again." The bad guys are ubiquitous: behind barrels, in the ceiling, on the floor, running down the corridor, playing gin rummy in the loft conversion, everywhere. At the end of the level, you have to blast up a couple of particularly unpleasant baddies (who we'll call Bruce and Anthea for no good reason at all) before you embark on stage two.



Thomas The Tank Engine gets stuck into another Cuban Havana...

Miraculously, at this point you've got hold of a jeep. You hop on the back and act as tail gunners as you speed off down the jungle trails towards freedom. As a change from the usual into-the-screen scroll, the scenery disappears away from you – as it would if you were sitting on the back of a jeep. At the end of the trail you have to dispose of a rather large helicopter (piloted by Bruce and Anthea – they're not dead yet) before embarking on a luxury riverboat for a two week cruise in level three.

Actually, you're rear gunners again, shooting up the Gooks who pop out of the undergrowth on the riverbanks. Then there are the pursuing boats to



There's nothing better than messing about in boats...

deal with, not to mention the planes flying overhead taking High Explosive dumps on you. At the end, you come across a ruined temple thingy where you meet up with Bruce and Anthea again. In fact, it's all been an episode of the *Generation Game* and you didn't even realise!

Taking your place in front of the conveyor belt, you have 20 seconds (maybe a bit longer actually) to remember all the bad guys from level four, in which you fight your way along a deep ravine. "Large truck, um, planes, erm, napalm explosions, um, um, cuddly toy! Cuddly toy, loads of men with massive guns, erm, cactus with a ribbon around it, erm..." That's it! And you've got one of Brucey's Bonuses: that cactus was a holiday for two in level five! A trip across the desert in a jeep! *(That's enough Generation Gaming. Ed.)*

For some unknown reason, there appears to be an armoured train in the middle of the desert. You have to shoot this up before you get on to level six – the bombed out city. This is a bit of a nasty one, with snipers hidden in the ruins and grunts lobbing Molotov cocktails all over the shop. Strictly a shandy-free zone. At the end of the level is a massive concrete bunker which you pile into enthusiastically.

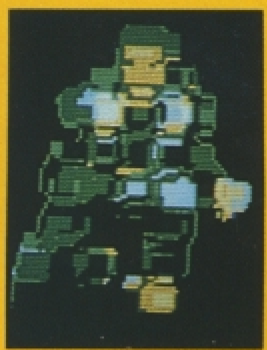
Things have reached fever pitch now as you get into the back of a clapped out Cortina with wings on. Yep, you've guessed it, tail gunner time again. Flying over the sea, you have to shoot out the submarines (which launch missiles at you), including one completely huge and unpleasant one.

Finally (sigh of relief) you reach terra firma again. But do you keep you feet on the ground? Nope, helicopter time. In true 'Nam style, you're job is to lean out and wave at the passers by with your supergun. Hello! Blam! Good afternoon! Splat! Nice to see you! Here, have a lump of lead in your gizzard! There are tanks, trucks, the works... I mean it is the last level, what did you expect?



A CHIP OFF THE OLD COIN-OP

Once upon a time, someone from US Gold gave Creative Materials a Sega coin-op. "Convert this," they demanded, "and convert it so seemlessly well that people will get trouser-wettingly excited about how the graphics are incredibly close to the original!"





A bit crap really, aren't they? Reject the digitised graphics.





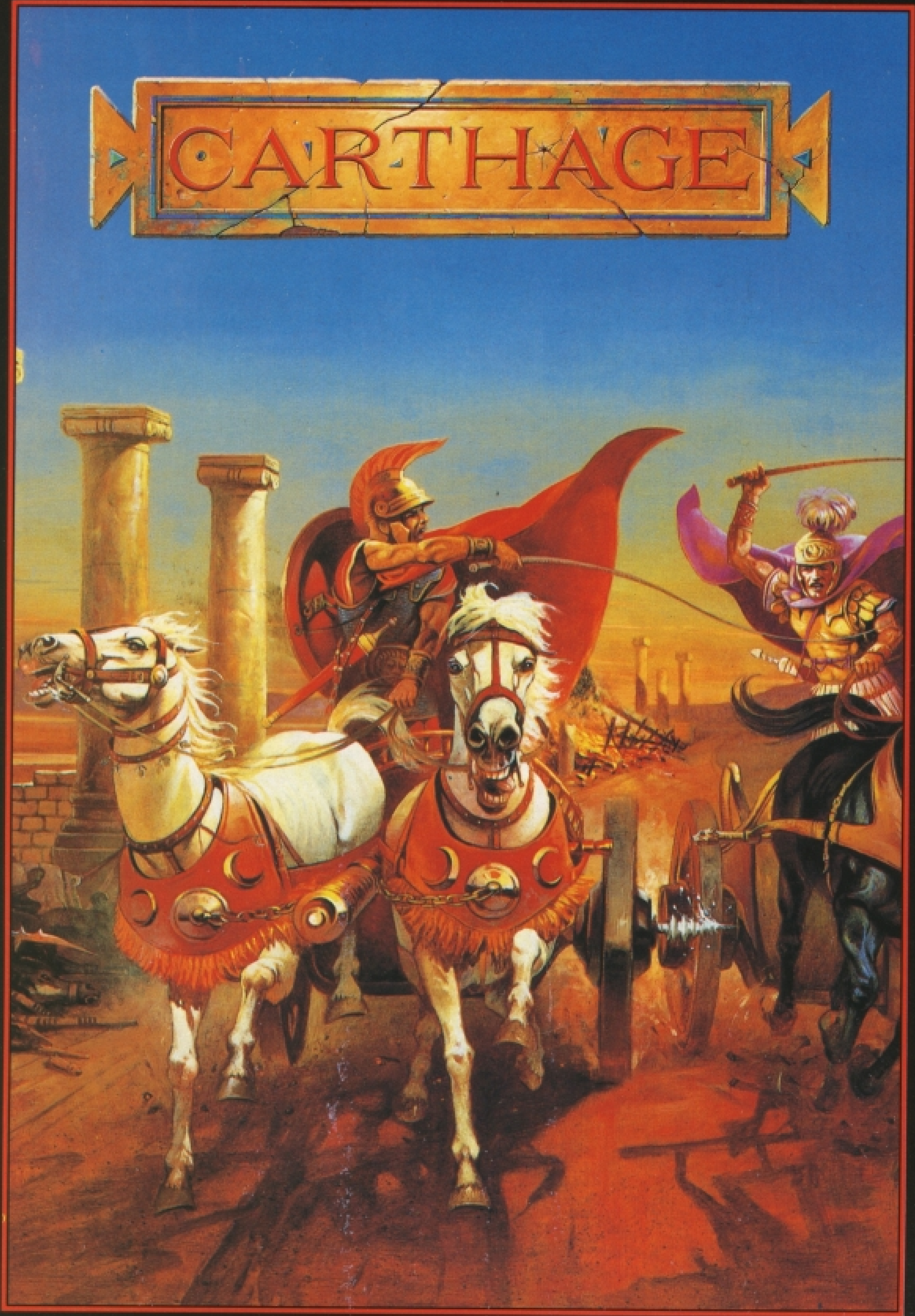


This is more like it. SEGA sprites 'stolen' out of the motherboard ROMs and transferred to Amiga. Colours are then reworked.

HOW TO DO IT

ZERO health warning: reading this could turn you into a tekkie. You know, spotty face, sleeping all day and spending all night programming parallax scrolling routines...

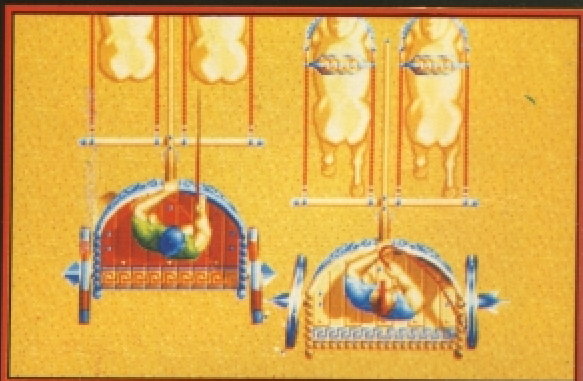
At first we intended to use digitised graphics in both *Line Of Fire* and *ESWAT*. We began by using an ST VIDI unit to grab the graphics in monochrome, then recolouring by hand. This had the disadvantage of being slow, and also the results looked... iffy. Then we bought a COLOUPIC digitiser from JCL, and found that it didn't work with the NTSC signal from the arcade boards. JCL very kindly offered to write some new software for the unit, and also to change the hardware so that it would work with the Japanese boards, although they charged us an arm and a leg for doing it. Using this system, the backgrounds came out looking OK, but the sprites were still very messy, although with a fair amount of touching up they would have been usable. At this point we thought 'bugger this for a game of soldiers' so we pulled the ROMS out of the arcade boards (they are completely non-standard models, made especially for SEGA) and built a custom board so that an Amiga could be interfaced to them. Once decoded, writing a utility to convert the SEGA sprite format into Amiga-compatible IFF files was straightforward. The only remaining problem was some extensive remapping work on Pixmate, to fit all the sprites into one 32-colour palette per level. (All the SEGA sprites have separate 16-colour palettes, selected from a possible 24 million colours.) Compared to all the monkeying around with graphics, the programming was straightforward. In other words *Line Of Fire* was quite a challenge.


CARTHAGE

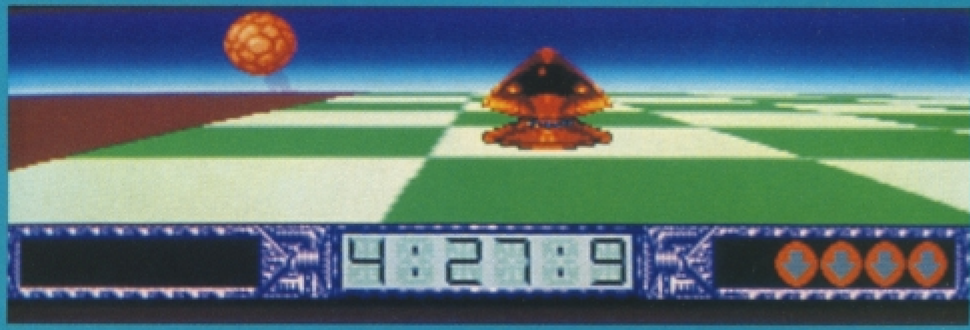








ZERO previews? Um... let's think, well they're a bit like being at the cinema really – the part when you're shown all those tantalising trailers of goodies to come. Except the good part is that here you can keep flicking back to them and you're not surrounded by 300 irritating people crunching popcorn. So settle down in that armchair and take a slug of your Kia-Ora 'cos it's time for a nice, big, juicy hot dog...



MASTERBLAZER

If you're lucky enough to have eight friends and you don't know what to do with them (except borrow money off them and all the other things one usually does to friends), then this could well be the game for you. A high speed future sports game, which was very popular in its 8-bit (*Ballblazer*) form *Masterblazer* now has a tournament option allowing for up to eight players. Also new is the training option and a racing game. Rainbow Arts was given a hand in the update by American company Lucasfilm. Let's hope the Americans are equally skilful when they start changing the rules of football for the next World Cup.

● Available from Rainbow Arts in November on ST, Amiga and PC, priced £24.99.

ROTATOR

Oh no not another flippin' powercut, it's enough to make you burn your share issue. Except this is no common or garden oh-dear-three-households-turned-on-their-lights-simultaneously-and overloaded-the-system sort of powercut. This time aliens have destroyed the pylons that connect all generators to Central Base. Cut off from its energy source and facing the prospect of a life without microwaves, the human race looks doomed. Only you and your multi-vehicle rotator can save the day by reactivating the defence systems before the aliens (wearing their "That's The Beauty Of Gas" T-shirts) reach the generators. The 32 different levels and 11 soundtracks mean it's probably a lot more fun than anything on TV.

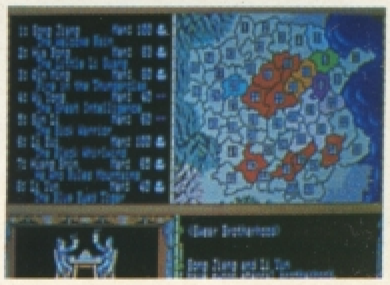


● Available now from Rainbow Arts on ST, Amiga and PC, priced £19.99.

BANDIT KINGS OF ANCIENT CHINA

The name Gao Qiu may not at first strike you as the epitome of all evil. More like the epitome of dodgy pronunciation to be honest. However, this collection of vowels is a minister in China circa 1101 and has just seized all imperial authority. The only person who can stop him is you, if you can lay off the pillaging long enough. Amidst a range of terrains and seasons you can fight, drink and barter your way to the top; even if it's only the top of the gallows.

● Available from Infogrames in January on ST and Amiga, priced £34.99 and PC, priced £39.99.



GENGHIS KHAN

Ol' Genghis was a man who knew what he liked and what he liked was marauding. He knew that nothing is as soothing at the end of a hard day than cornering your opponents in a field and butchering them. Now you too can soothe yourself in a world of war and conquest. Enemies must be slaughtered, conquered lands must be governed and heirs must be provided. (Don't ask how, you should have paid more attention in class.) If you don't fancy being Genghis, then you can cast yourself as Richard The Lion Heart, Alexious III or Shogun Minamoto – all of whom knew a good massacre when they saw one.

● Available from Infogrames at the end of November on ST/Amiga, priced £34.99 and PC, priced £39.99.



DEUTEROS



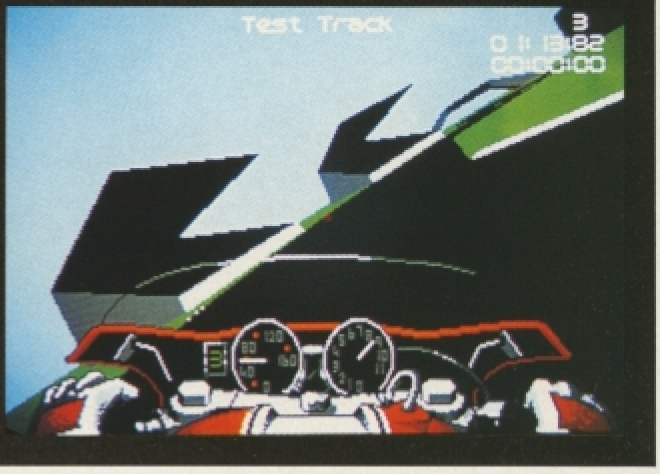
Got nothing to do for the next 60 hours or so? In that case you might be able to complete this sequel to the sold-by-the-truckload success *Millennium 2.2*. Mind you 60 hours isn't that long when there's a whole universe to colonise. Since the previous colonists ceased transmitting under mysterious circumstances many years ago, you can bet your last Ecu that there's something nasty lurking out there. Something that's not too keen on being colonised. If not, all those eerie graphics and sound effects are going to be somewhat wasted.

● Available from Activision in January on ST and Amiga, priced £24.99.

TEAM SUZUKI

In order to capture the thrills and spills of a 500cc Grand Prix season, Gremlin strapped one of their programmers to the handlebars of a Team Suzuki bike for the duration of a Grand Prix. Well, that's a bit of a lie, but Gremlin have worked very closely with Team Suzuki and have spent a lot of time loitering round race tracks, drinking maxpax coffee and eating raw hamburgers. Such self-sacrificing research plus filled vector scrolling should make for some pretty exciting and authentic racing thrills.

● Available from Gremlin in December on ST and Amiga, priced £24.99. (PC version to follow in New Year.)



ST CHART

1. **POWERMONGER** Bullfrog/Electronic Arts
2. **TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES**/Mirrorsoft
3. **CORPORATION** Core Design
4. **WONDERLAND** Magnetic Scrolls/Virgin
5. **SUPREMACY** Virgin
6. **F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER** MicroProse
7. **EPIC** Ocean
8. **THE IMMORTAL** Electronic Arts
9. **THEIR FINEST HOUR** Lucasfilm/US Gold
10. **SHADOW OF THE BEAST** Psygnosis

Shipping Charts supplied by Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street, London W1. Tel. 071-631 1234



TEST DRIVE III

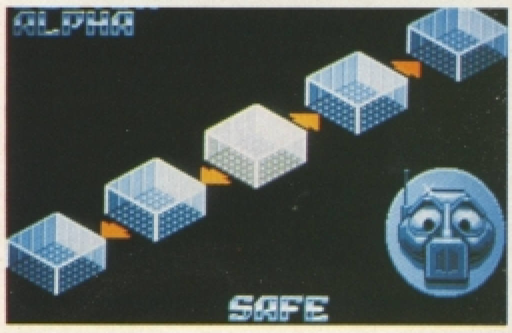
Roads are the unacceptable face of authoritarianism. What right has anyone to tell you where you should or shouldn't drive or how fast you should do it? Fortunately, the third game in the million selling *Test Drive* series allows you to drive your big, fat, powerful car how and where you like in your race against the clock or other cars. With dead ends, rivers, waterfalls and a range of foul weather conditions you'll be able to use the replay option to watch a wide range of accidents, usually with you as the victim.

● Available now from Accolade on PC, priced £29.99.

BOTICS

By the 21st century the demand for televised sport has become so vast that there aren't enough athletes to take part. (Probably 'cos they're inside watching it on telly.) To solve this problem, robots are used in their place. This means the sports can be faster and more violent than humans would be able to play. *Botics*, a sort of cross between squash, tennis and origami is so fast and violent that even the referee's a robot. Makes a change from the usual Kop chant "The referee's a..."

● Available from Krisalis in November on ST and Amiga, priced £19.99.



TENTACLE



The wheel is all very well, but it's a bit old hat really. It's getting about time for a change. In *Tentacle* the transport industry has done away with the wheel and started using a sort of spring come hydraulic pogo stick instead. Controlling a vehicle with a giant pogo stick at each corner is not easy at the best of times. When you're being buzzed by aliens, it verges on the extremely difficult. Shoot, trip, overbalance, crash. Oh well, so much for progress.

● Available from Millennium in early Spring 1991 on ST and Amiga, priced £24.99.

HILL STREET BLUES

Lumbered with a name like Captain Frank Furillo your life was never going to be easy. However, being assigned to the Hill Street Precinct was a bit of a bum rap by any standards. To keep the streets safe for the honest citizens (both of them) you've got all the officers from the TV series and an I.D. Computer with 600 hundred plus entries. Better still, you've got some traffic lights! Against this fearsome armoury are lined up drunks, junkies, bag snatchers, advertising executives, estate agents and all manner of criminal low life.



● Available from Krisalis in February on ST, Amiga and PC, priced £24.99.



IT'S WACKY
IT'S CATCHY.....
.....IT'S MORE THAN
UP TO SCRATCHY.
9 LIVES
Bob Cat has a girl in every town, but there is one who is special to his heart; Claudette Cat. Claudette has the biggest eyes you've ever seen and Bob aims to make her his Queen. Off Bob goes to sing his night song, but arrives just in time to see his beloved being whisked away in a net by two of the Mad Scientist's men. What horrendous experiments will the scientists carry out on old cutie paws? Can Bob save her in time?
Screen shots from Atari ST format.
Discover new wonders of animation around every corner and new levels of endurance in your joystick hand.
The platform game is back and how! 9 Lives contains some of the greatest animation ever seen in any computer game, its playability is amazing the desire to rescue the curvaceous Claudette Cat will keep you mapping for hours on end.
RAVE
RAZE MAGAZINE 93%
•Four massive levels each featuring over a hundred rooms.
•Stunning animation.
ARC
REACH OUT FOR THE POWER
•The ultimate in platform playability.
•Original game soundtrack.
•Includes FREE colour poster.
Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.
REACH OUT FOR THE POWER OF ARC
ATARI ST· CBM AMIGA £24.99
ARC, P.O. Box 555, Slough SL2 5BZ.

DRAGONS LAIR II: TIME WARP

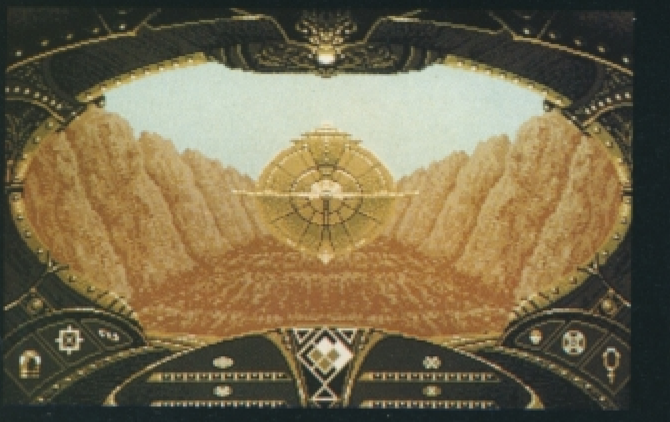


To be honest, anyone who's got a crush on a princess called Daphne deserves everything that's coming to them. Still beggars can't be choosers, least of all beggars called Dirk the Daring. So it's back in time you go to begin a rescue mission amidst a world of full screen animation. Fail to rescue Daphne before the evil Mordroc places the death ring on her finger and you'll lose her forever. Succeed and you can start saving up for your Dirk 'N' Daphne sunstrip.

● Available from Readysoft at the end of November on ST and Amiga, price £44.95.

ECO PHANTOMS

Diamonds are forever. Or at least they were until a race of aliens started charging round the universe and plundering minerals from any planet that they set their greedy little eyes on. Before long they arrive on Earth. (That smacks of dodgy reconnaissance since Earth isn't exactly rolling in minerals these days.) In less time than it takes to say "National Union of Mineworkers" the human race has been enslaved and set to work in the mines. Having stolen one of the aliens' ships you can set out to rescue your enslaved fellow humans in a world of Jules Verne graphics and futuristic danger.



● Available from Electronic Zoo, in late November on ST, Amiga and PC, price £24.99.

AMIGA CHART

1. **F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER** MicroProse
2. **POWERMONGER** Bullfrog/Electronic Arts
3. **WONDERLAND** Magnetic Scrolls/Virgin
4. **SUPREMACY** Virgin
5. **THE IMMORTAL** Electronic Arts
6. **CORPORATION** Core Design
7. **WINGS** Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft
8. **POOLS OF RADIANCE** SSI/US Gold
9. **THEIR FINEST HOUR** Lucasfilm/US Gold
10. **ELVIRA** Accolade

DICK TRACY



It's hard to believe that characters like Pruneface, The Brow and Big Boy can hide anywhere for more than about four pico seconds without attracting attention to themselves. Somehow they've managed it. As the Dick with the yellow jacket, you've got to battle your way through 60 levels of downtown streets and uptown locations. Once you've located the mobsters' hideouts, there's the small matter of arresting them. Just you against four of the most evil, cruel and ruthless criminals of the century. "Er... good evening gentleman, I was... er... oh forget it."

● Available from Disney Software at the end of November on ST, Amiga and PC, priced £24.99.



OUTLANDS

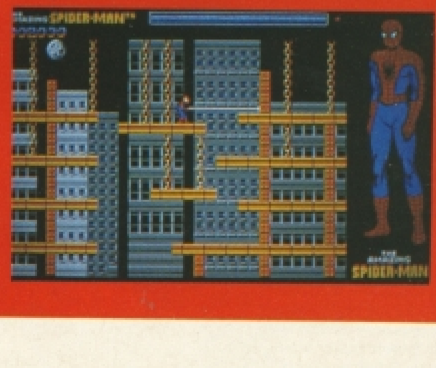
Don't believe what you've read elsewhere. *Outlands* may well be set in the wild west – but this has yet to be finalised. The action may yet end up in the Merrie England of Robin Hood. What is certain is that the game will have something of a *Populous* look and sets you up as a god/spirit trying to save your people from an evil ruler. Use influence, magic and out and out violence to overcome the forces of evil and give your followers a good time.

● Available from Millennium in early Spring on ST, Amiga and PC, priced £24.99.

SPIDERMAN

"Spiderman, spiderman/Does whatever a spider can." Well not everything of course. He can't after all climb out of plugholes and rarely does he eat his companion after mating. However, in this new platform game, he can battle his way through the old film sets at the Rockwell Studios in his attempt to rescue Mary Jane and then eat her (probably).

● Available now from Disney Software on Amiga and PC, priced £24.99 and ST, priced £19.99.




BADLANDS™
From the creators of the classic Super Sprint comes Badlands – a fabulous conversion of the popular coin-op.
It's been 50 years since the nuclear disaster and a new sport has evolved in the arid wastelands known as the Badlands. Sprint Racing with a killing touch is the sport – a destructive battle between armoured cars. It's all out war on the track as players blast the drone cars and each other to finish first.
Aggressive and dangerous, in the Badlands only the ruthless live to tell the tale. Customise your racer with extra missiles, speed, tyres, turbo boosts and shields. Avoid oil spills and a host of hazards to race the eight unique tracks which become more dangerous as the level of difficulty increases.
Badlands: For one or two players – its ruthless, destructive and great fun!
Available on: Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC 3.5" & 5.25", Commodore 64 (cassette, disk) Amstrad (cassette, disk) Spectrum +3, Spectrum 48/128
Programmed by: Teque London Ltd
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™ Atari Games Corporation
© 1990 Artwork & Packaging Domark Software Ltd
Published by Domark Software Ltd, Ferry House, 51-52 Lacy Road, London SW15 1PR
Tel: +44(0)81-780 2224
Amiga & Atari ST Screenshots
TENGEN
The Name in Coin-Op Conversions
DOMARK

CHART

1. **MIDWINTER** Rainbird/Microprose
2. **WONDERLAND** Magnetic Scrolls/Virgin
3. **SILENT SERVICE II** Microprose
4. **STAR CONTROL** Accolade
5. **ELVIRA** Accolade
6. **TEST DRIVE III** Accolade
7. **PORTS OF CALL** The Disk Company
8. **TRACON II/Wesson** International/Mindscape
9. **ULTIMA VI** Origin/Mindscape
10. **WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO** Broderbund/Domark

Shipping Charts supplied by Virgin Computer Games Shop, Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street, London W1. Tel. 071-631 1234

SAVAGE EMPIRE

There are certain people who, when you hear their voices on the phone, make you wish you hadn't got up in the morning or that you'd accepted that three week holiday in Siberia. One of these people is Lord British who never gets in touch to ask about Auntie Ethel's lumbago or for a quick chat about the weather. No, when Lord British gives you a bell you can be sure it's in order to send you out on some death defying adventure. Incorporating the *Ultima VI* driver, *Savage Empire* plunges you into a world of jungles, danger and 1950's B-movies.



● Available now from Origin/ Mindscape on PC, priced £34.99.



CAR-VUP

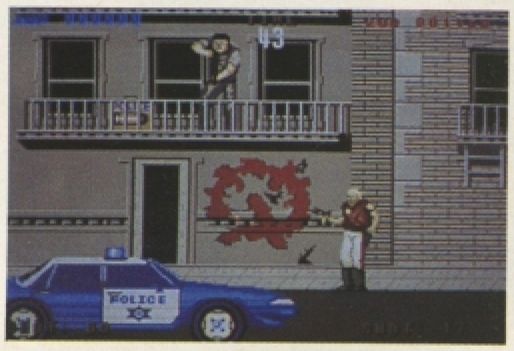
Driving can be a pretty hectic and bumpy ride at the best of times. When your road consists of 48 levels of platforms, you might begin to wish you'd mended that near side shock absorber. When your enemies consist of traffic cones with legs and bouncing jack hammers you might begin to wish you'd taken the pledge. However, if you can come to terms with all this plus icons, which turn your opponents into carrots, then you should be able to handle the idea of being Arnie, who's a friendly little car and the star of *Car-Vup*. All the action takes place in a Cartoon world that's as dangerous as it is colourful.

● Available from Core in November on ST and Amiga, priced tba.

E-SWAT

Special Weapons And Tactics; well the special weapons make sense but tactics? Arrive, shoot, kill. Hardly Napoleonic strategy is it? The E in *E-SWAT* doesn't stand for Extra but Elite so you have to earn your place in the squad. Once qualified, you'll be equipped with elite, robotic, exo-skeleton armour and sent out on 15 levels of mayhem in Cyber City. It's difficult to see quite how blasting everything in sight is going to restore order to an anarchic city. Still maybe only the Elite understand this sort of thing. ("When a society admires its shock troops, then that society ought to worry where it's going.")

● Available from US Gold at the end of November on ST and Amiga, price £24.99.



WING COMMANDER



If a kettle took 20 years to boil you might start thinking that there was something wrong with it. "This kettle doesn't work, better try another one." By the year 2654AD the war between the humans and the Kilrathi has been raging for 20 years but no one has thought of chucking it in as a bad idea. If you fancy flying your own starfighter in a strategic, graphically strong space conflict, then this can only be good news. If you'd rather invite aliens round for a cup of tea than blast them to pieces then you're probably in the wrong business.

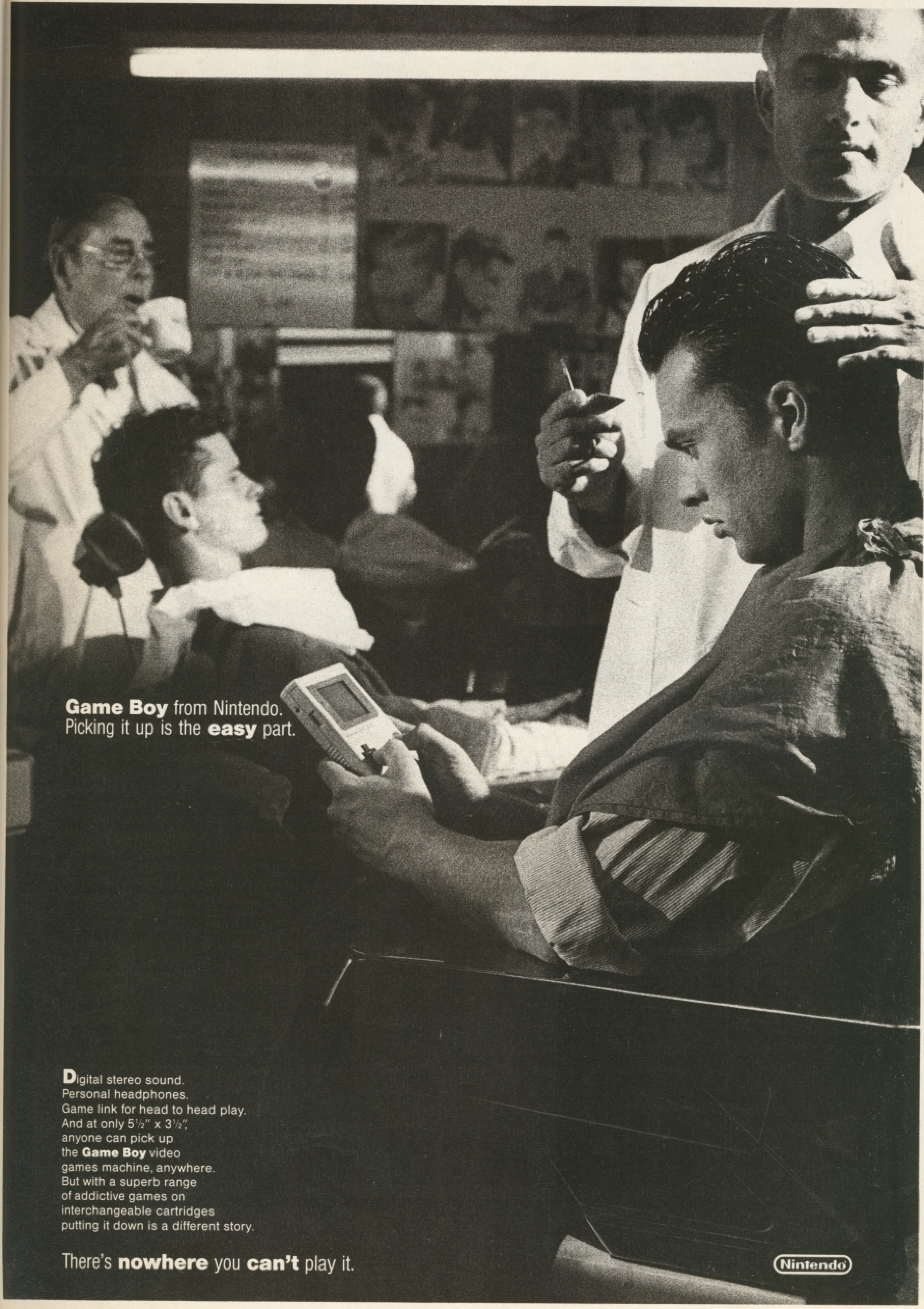
● Available now from Origin/ Mindscape on PC, priced £34.99.

WRATH OF THE DEMON

Canadian programmers Readysoft were onto rather a good thing working with Sullivan/Bluth to bring you games like *Space Ace* and *Dragon's Lair*. Now that Sullivan/Bluth have gone their own way are the lads at Readysoft facing a life on the dole? Will they be adding to the statistics of recession? Why no! The cunning Canadians have come up with their own game. Full of sword, sorcery, three megs of graphics and 1400 frames of animation, the game should see the boys through to the next giro.

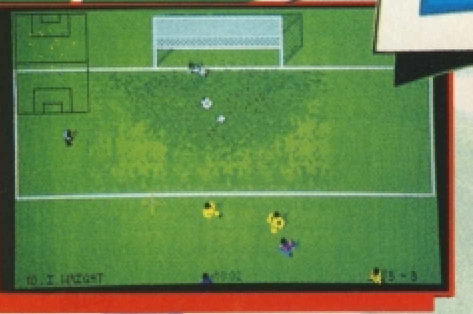


● Available from Readysoft in mid-November on ST, Amiga and PC, price £29.99.


Game Boy from Nintendo.
Picking it up is the **easy** part.
Digital stereo sound.
Personal headphones.
Game link for head to head play.
And at only 5½" x 3½",
anyone can pick up
the **Game Boy** video
games machine, anywhere.
But with a superb range
of addictive games on
interchangeable cartridges
putting it down is a different story.
There's **nowhere** you **can't** play it.
Nintendo

KICK OFF 2

A NEW DE
SOCCER SU




Amiga Screen Shots

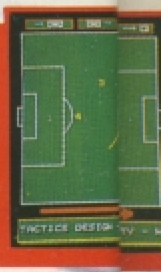
- BLISTERING PACE
- PIXEL PERFECT PASSING
- SUPERB TACTICAL GAMEPLAY

KICK OFF 2 greatly enhances the gameplay of KICK OFF, winner of the THE GAME OF THE YEAR in the U.K., and similar awards right across Europe. A host of new features have been added to the ones that enthralled players the world over.

* **Full size multi-directional scrolling pitch with the players, markings etc. in correct proportion.**
* **1 to 4 players option. (Amiga and ST only)**
* **2 players TEAM option against the computer or 2 other players. Hundreds of players each with a unique combination of attributes (stamina, pace, etc.) and skills (passing, shooting, tackling, etc.)**
* **Instinctive Kick Off joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot, head or chip the ball and do sliding tackles.**
* **Set piece. FREE KICKS including dummies and the ability to dip the ball or bend the ball round a defensive wall.**
* **9 types of corner kicks with full control of shot power. Long and short throw ins.**
* **Team selection from a squad of 16 with substitution and a choice of tactics.**
* **League and cup competitions with Extra Time, Injury Time and sudden death penalty shoot outs.**
* **Facility to view, edit and save the Action Replays and create a Golden Shots disc.(Excl. IBM & CBM 64)**
* **Facility to load Player Manager teams and tactics for a single or league game.**
* **Red and yellow cards, 16 different referees, injury time and a host of features to create an atmosphere for a game which is real fun to play.**

ST ACTION - The best game ever to grace the ST. Highest accolade I can give.
AMIGA USER INT - The best computer game ever **97%**
THE ONE - Ultimate soccer simulation. **96%**
THE ACE - Brilliant. Buy, Buy, Buy. **930.**
AMIGA FORMAT - Best footy game to have appeared on any machine. **94%**
ST FORMAT - What a game! Gem to play. Magic. **90%**
C & VG - Championship winning material. **95%**
GAMES MACHINE - Probably the best sports game ever. **92%**
COMMODORE USER - No other footie game can touch it. **90%**
AMIGA ACTION - Surpasses all other football games. **93%**
POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY - Nothing short of brilliant.
NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - Computer football event of the year.

AMIGA & ST £19.99 EXP. AMIGA £24.99
IBM (AT & XT Turbo, EGA & VGA) £24.99
CBM 64 - SPECTRUM - AMSTRAD £9.99, £14.99



An International class player takes charge of a third division club as Player Manager. His brief is simple **-Bring Back The Glory Days.**

His success depends on his playing skills on the pitch and managerial skills in devising winning tactics, aquiring the right players from the transfer market and building a team worthy of the highest honours.

* **Unique facility to design and implement your own tactics.**
* **Over 1000 individual players, each with a unique combination of attributes and skills.**
* **A lively transfer market. Haggle for the best deal.**
* **4 division league and a cup tournament with sudden death penalty shoot out.**

The Player Manager brings the every day realities of a manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player, his triumphs and his failures into a sharp FOCUS.

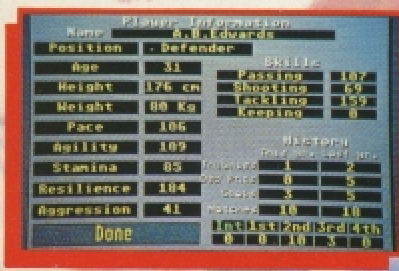
ST. ACTION - A stroke of pure genius.
THE ONE - An exceptional football management simulation, Astounding depth. Most involved, rewarding and playable.
THE ACE - Successfully blends challenging soccer management with frantic end to end arcade action. **920**
NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - The sheer depth is incredible. A definitive management game.
COMMODORE USER - At last a management game that requires true management skills - a winner. **94%**
ST FORMAT - Brilliant. **93%**
AMIGA FORMAT - Enthralling and addictive. **93%**
ZZAP - Best football management game ever written. **92%**

AMIGA - ST £19.99

DIENSION IN
R SMULATIONS

ne. **94%**







THE FINAL WHISTLE
Amiga - ST £12.99 (Rel. Nov.)

Raises the skills required and gameplay of KICK OFF 2 to new heights.

Two extra kits.
Look at any player stats. (attributes and skill) before selecting squad.
Totally new corner kicks with full control of the power, height and trajectory of the ball.
Enhanced throw ins and penalty shots.
Provision to flick the ball in the air and do a blinding header or a spectacular overhead kick.
New two players team mode. Player 1 in position or nearest to the ball and player 2 in position or keeper.
Linesmen and referee on the pitch.
A new player attribute FLAIR. A player with a high level of flair will try a solo attempt at the goal.
4 new pitches - Wembley - Icy - Muddy - Non-League

And Lot's More

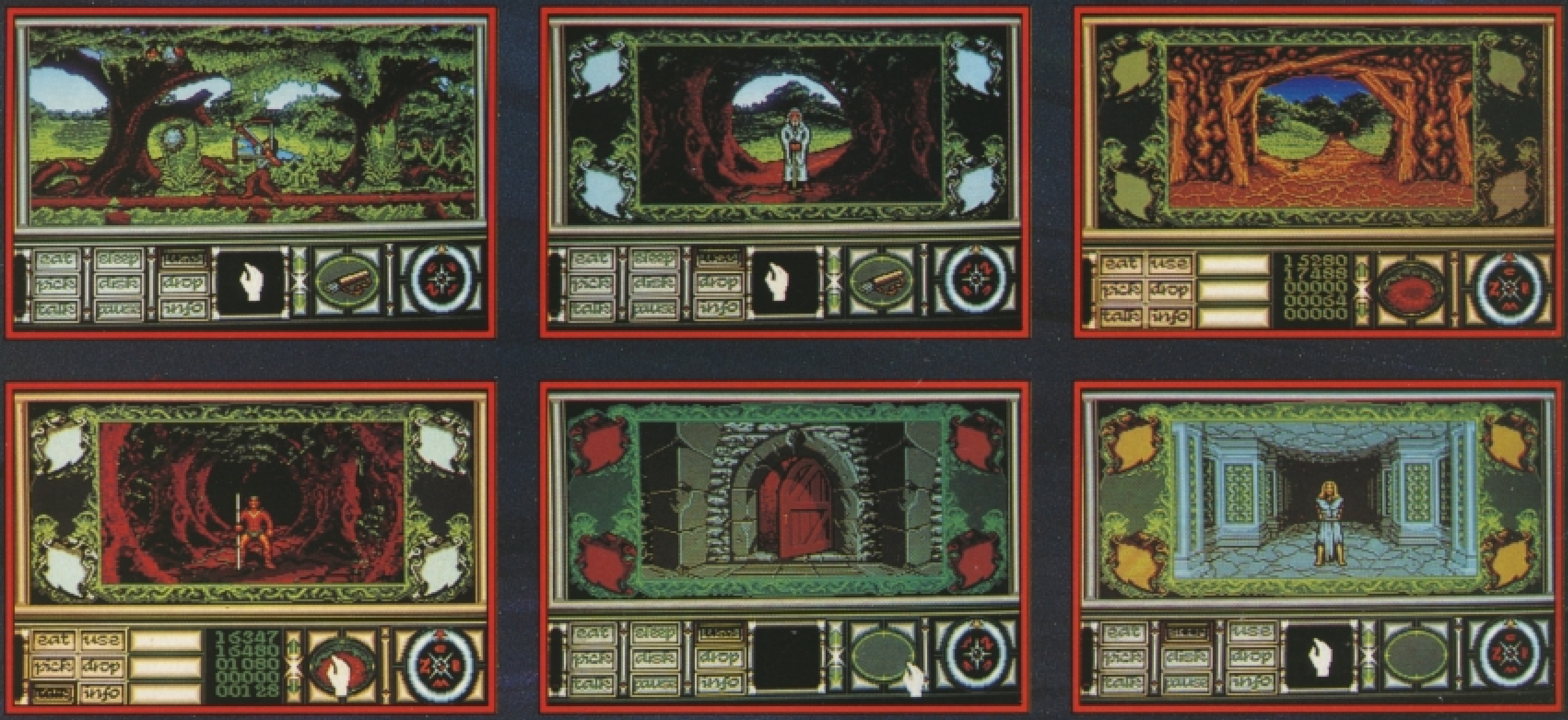
WINNING TACTICS (£6.99 - Rel. Nov.) - A collection of tactics for use in Player Manager or KO2 with full explanations.
RETURN TO EUROPE (£9.99 - Rel. Dec.) - Three European cup competitions. UEFA cup - European Cup - Cup Winners Cup.
GIANTS OF EUROPE (Rel. 1991) Best teams of Europe on one disc.



Draft specifications. Subject to changes without notice

ANCO SOFTWARE, UNIT 10, BURNHAM TRADING ESTATE, LAWSON ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT.
TELEPHONE No: 0322 92513/18 FAX No: 0322 93422

OBITUS



YOUR OWN WORST NIGHTMARE . . .

From Psygnosis, Impelling RPG with more than a dash of hack-'n'-slash.

You're in the depths of your own worst nightmare . . . but this time there's no waking up.

Lost and alone in a dangerous and alien world you must discover where you are, how you got here . . . and how you're going to get out!

In a frantic search of the unfamiliar land you explore aMAZEing forests, mines and underground complexes collecting objects and interacting with indigenous creatures.

Re-emerging in to daylight you race along perfect parallax action scenes, dispatching enemies as you battle ever deeper into the unknown.

Amiga Screen Shots

PSYGNOSIS



PLOT YOUR OPPONENTS DOWNFALL AND...STRIKE



It all seems so easy, but can you beat the micro or your partner, at this hideously mind boggling game.

ADDICTION!

Addiction!...that's the name of the game. The concept is simple ...destroying blocks! But once you've got control of those bricks will you ever let go?

TAITO

Special blocks will give you extra lives... GREAT!... but believe me, you'll need to take every advantage of this software's hardware! You'll need the skill of a Rubi-Cube master and the reflexes of a pigeon at a skeet shoot! Plot your move, take aim and block 'em out!... It's that simple... as simple as grilling ice cubes!

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CBM AMIGA - ATARI ST

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ZERO reviews

CRITICS' CORNER

This month we decided to conduct an 'experiment' on our reviewers. First we wrapped them in packing tape (leaving small holes for their mouths and noses) and then we tied a long rope round their ankles before lowering them (head first) down the lift-shaft of ZERO towers. We left them for one hour, pulled them back out again, unwrapped them and asked if they could make a clay model that would, in their view, best describe the experience.



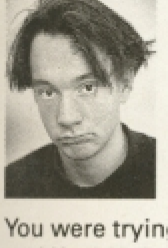
Tim 'Rhythm King' Ponting: "I banged my head on the bottom of the lift shaft," complained the demon drummer. We explained that it was his fault for being so tall, and asked him to produce a model. "What on earth is this so-called experiment going to prove?" he said. We explained that we were being paid a small fortune by the Harvard Psychology Unit to do some research into spacio-tactile subliministics. "What in Christ's name is that?" he asked. We told him that no-one knew – which was why we were doing the research. "I think it's a load of crap," he spat. We pushed him again on the model front and he grudgingly produced a vase. Why a vase? we quizzed. "I'm good at vases," he snapped. Lawks!



David 'Whistlin' Rick' Wilson: David said that he didn't want to make a model and that he felt all dizzy after being held upside-down. We gave him a couple of aspirins, and offered him the lump of clay. "Look, I really do feel most odd," he said, pressing the point, "Look how unsteady I am on my feet." We told him that it was all in the name of science and that he could always sit down. We offered the clay again. He refused the offer and sat down. "It's no good," he continued, "I'm feeling worse now." Then he made a little choking noise. "Quick! Give me the clay!" he screamed, suddenly grabbing the lump and making the quickest pot that's ever been made. And then he was sick in it. Very sick.



Lord Paul Lakin: The ZERO aristocrat was mortified: "I'm not using that clay – it's full of David's vomit." We explained that it was the only lump we had. "Certainly not," he exclaimed, shaking his head and pouting. We told the blue-blooded critic that he had to play the game. After all, Tim had gone along with it. "Yes, but that was before there was sick everywhere," he moaned, adding, "Give it to someone else, let them clean it up and then come back. I'll make anything you want out of it then." Lakin was sticking to his guns. We had the job of handing violent psycopath McCandless a bowl full of chunder! Yikes!



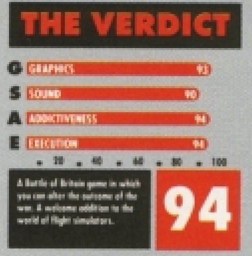
David 'McVicca' McCandless: "What's this stuff?" asked the planet earth's most dangerous computer games reviewer. We said that it was rice pudding and that David's model had been inspired by thoughts of food so obviously he fashioned a clay bowl full of his favourite desert. We explained that David, being a perfectionist, had gone to great lengths to make his model better than everybody else's. McCandless looked suspiciously at the bowl. "Rice pudding doesn't have peas and bacon in it," he said, frowning, "This is vomit! You were trying to put one over on me. Bastards! I'm off to get my 9mm MP5 Heckler and Koch!" Eeek! Moving very quickly on then...



Betty 'Duncan MacDonald' Boo: Reviewer by day, sexy rap mistress by night, Duncan studied the bowl. We explained that we were wrapping up the experiment because McVicca was about to go on the rampage with his new gun. "I've got a great idea," he said, reaching into his Boo-Bag and bringing out a Ronco Perspex Encasing Kit (Only £4.99). Following the instructions on the box, very soon the clay bowl and vomit were immortalised inside a cube of the quick-hardening glasslike plastic. "There," said Duncan, "Another fashion accessory to go with my Space 1999 gear. A Boo-Bowl pendant!" Watch out for it in the next issue of *Smash Hits*.

WHAT'S WHAT

Confused by the savvy words of our stern critics? Just take a gander at how the scoring system works...



Games are marked out of 100 on four criteria; **Graphics, Sound, Addictiveness** and **Execution**. The first three are fairly self-explanatory but Execution may need a bit of illumination. Is there anything amazing about the scrolling for instance? Are all the sections of the game neatly tied together, showing a lot of care and thought on the part of the programmers? If so **Execution** will score well here. If you can't be bothered with all that then the **Overall Mark** gives you an at a glance summary. Now if we've said it once we've said it a thousand times... this mark is not an average of the other scores. Got that?

A game scoring 90 or above in the non-average Overall Mark department gets the much sought after **ZERO HERO** award (which is a flash way of saying 'buy it'.) Separate from the other scores (but not unconnected to them) is the **HASSLE FACTOR**. Are there 400 disk changes every pico second? Do you have to go through a boring title sequence before restarting? Things like that score here and they're marked out of 10.

Each review also contains a **WHAT'S WHAT** box which is basically a box packed with information telling you... er what's what in relation to price, format and release date.

Well that's that for the main reviews but let's not forget the others. Firstly there's the **DÉJÀ VU** section. Here you'll get reviews of new releases which aren't actually new at all (because they're already available on other formats). The **PRICE IS RIGHT** section is where you'll find the budget games reviewed. They only get an overall score because they're um... well rather cheap actually.

SIM EARTH

Creating a planet is a bit like making a McVitie's Chocolate Hob-nob. First you have to sort out the oaty, crunchy core before coating it all with brown sludgey life-forms. Who better then to check out a planetary simulation than the king of hand-held confectionery himself, *'Tim-Earthy' Ponting*...

It's a good job I'm not not a fanatical Philadelphian Bapto-Methodist really, isn't it? I mean, messing about with creation (sorry, Creation) just isn't the done thing. Mortals aren't supposed to take a planet from Primordeal sludge to intelligent life. And as for this evolution malarkey, well... But just to make sure it was alright with Him, we talked to Peter Pringle, ZERO's own trendy pastor.



Tidal waves, hurricanes... It must be Monday.

"Hello, I'm the Rev Peter 'Plumpo' Pringle and I'm here to reassure you about Our Heavenly Daddio and *Sim Earth*. He doesn't mind, I asked Him when I was at the last Christian Fellowship Youth Group meeting. You see, the Good Book doesn't have to be taken literally. For instance, when The Big J said 'Suffer the little children', he didn't mean 'Beat them around the head with a baseball bat'. Anyhow, it means that Evolution is His way of saying 'Cool it Mother Earth, rave on, shake your party thang', you, um, dig what I'm saying? So play *Sim Earth* and in your play, praise Him in his infinite Gameplay. Thanks for listening, hang loose, erm, dudes. Yo!"

ON THE SEVENTH DAY AT ABOUT 4 O' CLOCK

Thank you Peter, 'man'. That's a weight off our minds. But on with the review. *(Yeah. Ed.)* Time is the backbone that runs through the simulation. There are four time scales and you can start at the beginning of any one of them.

The Geologic scale is in billions of years and you start off with a lump of hot rock. You have to sort out the atmosphere and evolve multi-cellular life (i.e. on a par with Norman Tebbit). Then it's on to the Evolutionary period, time scale in millions of years, your task to nurture life until some bright spark discovers fire. From then on, it's Civilisation, time measured in thousands of years. The idea is to achieve the Industrial Revolution. Finally, you plunge into the unknown: Technology. Time is measured in years and your objective is interstellar travel. At which point your Sims stick rockets on their cities to boldly bog off in search of a new series of *Star Trek* with a better Captain Kirk than Patrick Stewart.

HOW TO BE GOD

So how on Earth (or Venus) do you go about it all? Well you can divide all the game functions into either 'input' or 'output'. Input is what you actively do to change the way the planet is functioning; output shows you how the planet reacts to your activities.

On the input side, there are a set of 'Models' to play with. For example, you can increase volcanic activity, decrease the reflectivity of cloud cover, instruct life in general to bonk a lot and alter the activities of your race of intelligent insects so that they devote all their energy to art and media, all with a few clicks of the mouse.

MAP WINDOW

1 **This is your world in a nutshell. Or at least a really nice graphic window. This is where you check out global trends on land, sea and air.**

LITHOSPHERE (GEOSPHERE)

Um, 'land' I think.

Terrain: shows oceans and altitude (currently selected). Double clicking opens 'Gaia Window' (see below).

Global Events: whenever there's a hurricane, earthquake, meteor fall or other catastrophic event, you can either close both eyes or follow its progress on this.

Continental Drift: a 'vector plan' of the directions in which the molten rock under the continents is moving. In other words, lots of arrows.

HYDROSPHERE

Try, erm, 'Sea'?

Hide/Show Oceans: toggles ocean on and off (only to let you look at the terrain without any sea, not in reality).

Ocean Temperature: click on this and the ocean turns multi-coloured: from red (almost as hot as the ZERO office) through yellow to blue (not very warm at all).

Ocean Currents: more arrows, this time showing the prevailing ocean currents.

ATMOSPHERE

The stuff we breathe.

Air Temperature: same as Ocean Temperature but for the bit on top. Double clicking brings up a box showing the proportions of all the different gases (Atmospheric Composition Graph). Keep an eye on this if you don't want a planet like a greenhouse. Unless you've evolved sentient tomatoes of course.

Rainfall: brings up a colour-coded rainfall map: the greener, the wetter.

Air Currents: same as Ocean Currents. More bleedin' arrers than on *Bullseye*.

BIOSPHERE

Living 'things'.

Biomes: the 'posh' word for flora (not as in marg, as in fauna). Displays the different habitats on your planet, from crap ones like Arctic and Desert to Forest and Jungle. Double clicking brings up the Biome Ratio Graph. Tells you that your planet is mainly swamp, i.e. crap.

Life: clicking this covers the map with coloured dots. The darker they are, the more sophisticated the life form. Double clicking brings up the Life Class Ratio Graph. Shows the relative proportions of groups of species.

Civilisation: clicking this should cover the map with dots representing your cities. If it doesn't, it's because you haven't got any, i.e. your sentient species is a shandy drinker. Double clicking brings up the Technology Ratio Graph, showing proportions of Stone Age peoples, Bronze Age etc.

GLOBE WINDOW

2 **A spherical, spinning version of the Map Window. It behaves in exactly the same way, except you can't fall off the edge. This is handy for players with a penchant for neat vodka, though the spinning can cause 'Cosmic Puke'.**

THIS IS YOUR LIFE

Seen this before somewhere? It's Earth in about 1994 and London's just exploded. *(Damn, I said it would be Belgium. Nostradamus.)* Your job is to bring order to chaos and persuade German tourists to emigrate to the stars.



EDIT WINDOW

3 This is where you interfere with what's happening on your planet.

TOOL ICONS

Place Life: clicking this brings up a sub-menu of life forms, cities and special tools for terraforming extreme environments. Select the one you require and 'place' it where you want it to appear in the Edit Window. The Energy cost of doing this is displayed in the box below (under the mushroom cloud).

Event Trigger: brings up a sub-menu of events. Well, cataclysmic disasters really, from Tidal Waves to Atomic Bombs. Some have 'uses', eg. earthquakes for raising mountains.

Plant Biome: lets you place various bits of flora on the planet's surface. There is, of course, no guarantee it'll survive. Plant jungle at the North Pole and you're wasting energy.

Set Altitude: either up or down. Select this and the land will rise or fall depending on the direction of the arrow.

Moving Tool: you can shift plants and animals about using this. Which can be useful for stopping wars.

Examine: select this and click on a square in the Edit Window. A box appears with details about any Biome, Life-Form or Civilisation in that square. Essential for checking out which habitats a particular species likes.

DATA LAYER BUTTONS

Oceans
Biomes
Humans
Niches
Events

These allow you to turn various things on and off in the Edit Window. If you want to look at the land closely, without all that messy life cluttering it up, then click on the Niches (Life) Button. It toggles the squirming fecund mass on and off. (Oooh no!) And so on with Oceans, Biomes, Humans (Cities) and Events...

CLIMATE OVERLAY BUTTONS

Heat
Clouds
Winds
SeaFlow
SeaHeat
Magma

These allow you to turn on a localised version of the main climate maps (from the Map Window) and superimpose them over the close-up Edit Window. For example; if you want to check out exactly where the heaviest rain is before you plant a forest, click Clouds (Rainfall) and a mass of coloured squares appear superimposed on the Edit Window. Pick the reddest and Bob's your tropical rainforest.

EVENTS

These show events in progress in the Edit Window. Here we see some grotty pollution over West Africa, fisticuffs East of Finland, plague in Ethiopia (what's new) and a convention of mushroom growers in London.

GAIA WINDOW

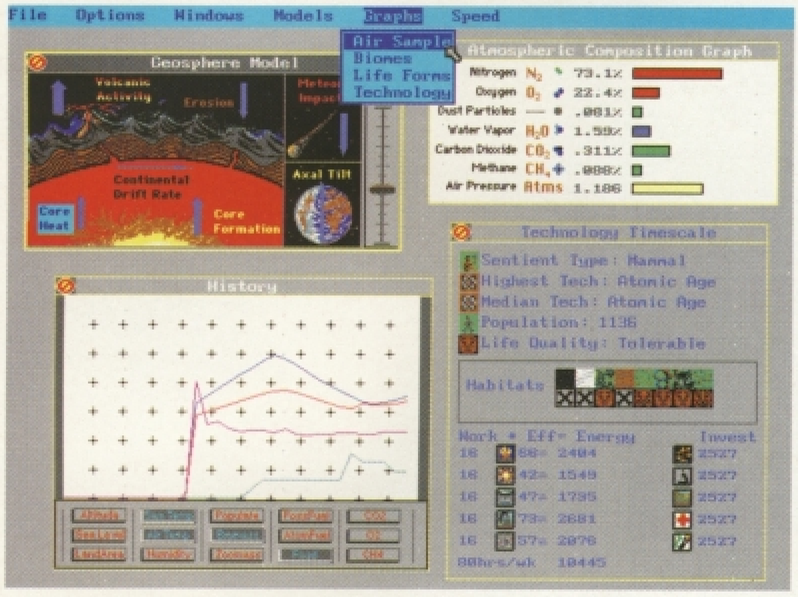
4 This rather cute anthropomorphic, animated planetoid represents Gaia – a sort of Earth Mother come Referee. She lets you know what she thinks of your actions – with comments like 'What are you doing?' and 'Why did you vote Tory at the last election?'.



The Mars scenario. Your job is to populate it with intelligent chocolate.

The rest of the 'inputting' is done in the Edit Window. This is just like *Sim City*. You can leave different forms of life lying around, drop the odd hurricane, plant a jungle or two, all by selecting the appropriate icon and clicking on the map. Say you want to help evolution on a bit by creating dinosaurs and dumping them in an equatorial forest. Easy, select the Place Life icon, choose 'dinosaur', move to the map and click in the jungle. Hey presto, a dinky little 'Thunder Lizard' wanders about looking for someone to play Doctors and Nurses with.

Everything else falls into the 'Output' category. There are thousands of graphs you can call up and maps of the entire planet showing rainfall distribution and about a million other things. (Nearly.)



A few of the, um, 'hard bits'.

THE LUCOZADE FACTOR

In *Sim City*, you needed Money to improve your settlement. Altering a planet costs Energy. You start off with a certain number of 'Omega Energy Units', and every action you perform reduces this total. Fortunately, your energy is continually being replenished by the planet itself, so it's a question of balancing 'income' and 'expenditure'. Blow a few hundred points on cranking up the sun and you may not have enough left to plant the forest that needed the light in the first place. It's a bit like being a cross between Chris Patten and John Major but without the crap haircuts.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Sim Earth
PUBLISHER	Maxis/Ocean
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	PC/tba
RELEASED	Early 1991

Tim: In future, I'd like everyone to call me Oh Totally Groovy Omnipotent One. I create planets before breakfast. I civilise barbarian ostriches. I cause mass extinction with my little finger (on the left hand). You see, *Sim Earth* does strange things to your ego. There's something deeply disturbing about running everything. Absolutely and completely everything, down to how crap the TV is on Saturday evenings.

Anyway, to give you an idea of how the game plays, witness the creation of *Planet Gunge*. Selecting Random Planet and a Geologic Time Scale, the screen fills with a big red lump. Um, looks a bit hot, let's try cooling it down a bit. Opening the Atmosphere Model window, clicking on Solar Input and moving the slider down effectively allows you to reduce the sunlight. It's a bit like inviting a 'chick' round and dimming the lights. Alternatively, you could increase the reflectivity of the clouds or even cool the core of the planet to achieve the same end.

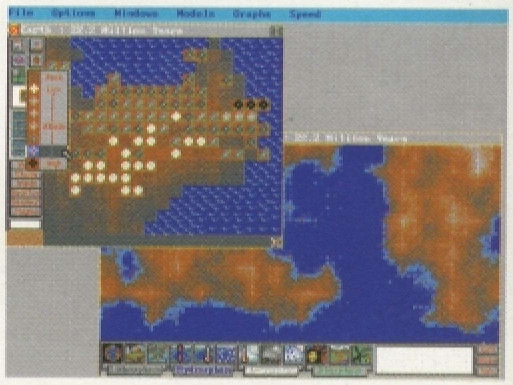
All of a sudden, the water vapour in the atmosphere condenses to form oceans. This is more like it. Time to get the DNA cooking. Selecting Place Life and Prokaryote, then clicking in a warm bit of ocean gets the evolutionary process going. Crank the game speed up, wander off into the kitchen and by the time you can say, "Oh, you mean my brother? He just popped in for a coffee", you've got Eukaryotes squirming about for all they're worth. Twiddle your fingers for a while longer and you cross the first hurdle as multi-cellular life evolves. Next stop intelligence. Okay, who are we going to go for? Dolphins? Reptiles? Or shall we just wait and see?

Calling up the Report window informs us that at present, the smartest life-form is a starfish called Brian with an IQ of 54. This is just sooooo easy. I think I'll take a nap. *(Ten minutes later.)* What's happening! 'Mass extinctions are occuring'? Oh no! Brian's IQ is only six now! The atmosphere has heated up due to the greenhouse effect, I'd better turn that off. What? 'Not enough energy'? I'll have to wait. Meanwhile, everything is dying off. Who said this was easy...

The scope of *Sim Earth* is absolutely massive. At first, you feel completely overwhelmed by it all. But with experimentation, it soon becomes quite clear what's what. The graphics are really neat, with 240 different species represented by tiny icons; it's much more fiddly than *Sim City* in every sense but this you get used to.

Set on any level other than Hard, the planet is self-regulating which makes life easier but also leads to a feeling of inevitability about the whole process of evolution, reducing the fun. In fact, that's the main problem with *Sim Earth*. There aren't really any goals: you have to build the goalposts and then make the rules up as you go along. But if you start thinking laterally and set a few problems for yourself – like how to make jellyfish sentient, or keeping Conservative politicians out of the House Of Commons – the enjoyment factor grows. And the scenarios can be quite a challenge, particularly terraforming Venus which starts off with a temperature of 477°c. Even so, the appeal of *Sim Earth* is far less broad than that of *Sim City*. If you're the sort of person who needs an 'end sequence' or a score to motivate you, then *Sim Earth* might prove a bit too obscure. If, on the other hand, you like to experiment, doodle and generally muck about, then try creating a world. It does wonders for your ego.

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
Gets a bit slow with lots of windows open.



Daisy World – a scenario where a planet is populated by, erm, daisies.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	88
S	SOUND	74
A	ADDICTIVENESS	76
E	EXECUTION	89

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Hugely complex but user friendly planetary simulation strictly for those of a philosophical bent. Oo-er.

83



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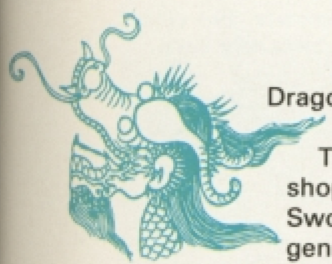
DRAGON BREED

First there was *R-Type* – one of the best shoot 'em ups ever. It was a coin op by Irem and a conversion by Activision. Now comes *Dragon Breed* another Irem coin-op, which Activision is hoping will be equally prominent in this Christmas' best sellers! *David Wilson* hopped onto his trusty pogo stick and hot-sticked it to the Activision office.





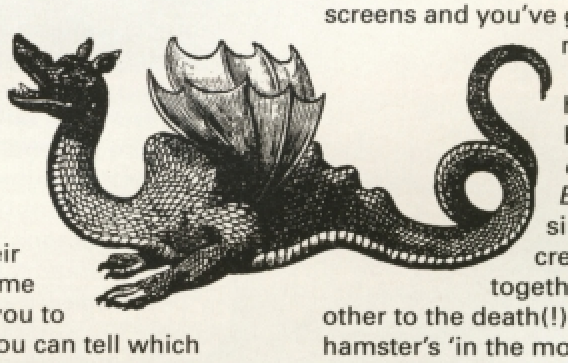
This baby is to Clifford what Mike Tyson is to Julian Clarey. This baby is to Smaug what Rambo is to Julian Lloyd Webber. Oh... and as for Puff...



Dragons, aren't you just sick of them? They're all over the shop. The whole Sword and Sorcery genre would be out the window without them, not to mention Dungeons and er, thingies. Well, I for one have had enough of them. My problem is though, that I've got this spiffing Activision game to look at, and it's called *Dragon Breed*. Um... I know, I'll do it, but I'm going to call it *Hamster Breed.*

Okay, so here we go... You get to play Kaylus, crowned king of the Agamen Empire at the tender age of fifteen. Now there were a lot of folk none too happy about having such a fresh faced rascal straight out of nappies dumped on the throne. They conspired together to release the King Of Darkness to seize power with the evil forces of Black Magic. Well, as the whole place starts to go to the dogs, wind full of miasma, ground rotting, litter all over the streets and everything made in Taiwan, in rides a hero mounted on a fabulous steed. Yes.. it's you Kaylus, astride Bahamoot the Hamster of Light (*For 'hamster' read 'dragon'. Ed*) Hurrah! Your task is to right wrongs, turn evil to good, cast light into the darkness and make sure bread always lands butter side up.

Hamster Breed is one of those special shoot 'em ups that has that certain little extra something. You play the man but your steed responds to you joystick commands. In addition to this, the large tail also swishes about with a nice inertia effect as you move up and down. There are dozens of power-ups for you to collect which change your weapon systems, and collecting further icons of the same type increases their power. Further some weapons enable you to do extra things (you can tell which you've got by the colour your mount turns – a golden hamster can swish his tail up and right around himself to protect the rider, whilst at the same time blasting out eight way shots!) As well as Kaylus firing his crossbow, the hamster (*Dragon. Ed.*) has an *R-Type* style 'beam up' weapon. Hold down the fire button to increase its potency. Oh, and when your hamster has fire breath (too much Tabasco Sauce) you can increase the length of the flame by speedy repetitive fire button tapping. Add to this enormous end of level monsters that occupy several screens and you've got the makings of a mega blast 'em up.



Apart from all this, hamsters are crap at breeding. (*Now he does mean hamsters. Ed.*) They are singularly solitary creatures and if put together will fight each other to the death(!). (Unless the lady hamster's 'in the mood'.) Then they are only supposed to have two litters per lifespan. Then if you're not too clever the mum hamster will eat all her babies!! In fact, if hamsters were as big as dragons, they'd probably have an equally bad press. Just imagine it – *Dungeons And Hamsters, Puff The Magic Hamster, Enter The Hamster.*(*SHUT UP!!! Ed.*)

WHAT'S WHAT

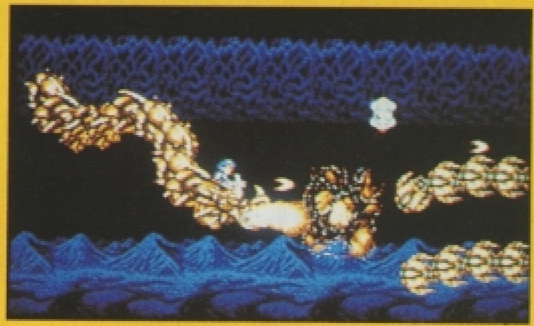
TITLE	**Dragon Breed**
PUBLISHER	**Activision**
PRICE	**£24.95**
FORMAT	**ST/Amiga**
RELEASED	**December**

THE DRAGON OF THE YEAR SHOW





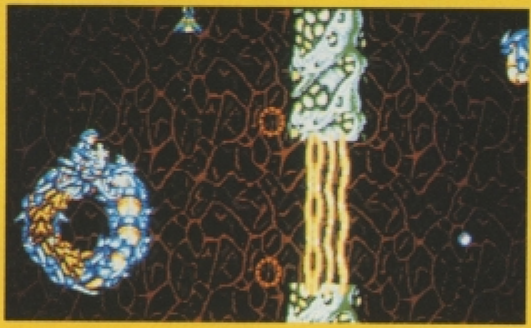
Here's the first contestant, it's Groblephet Sankyo Radio Cassette Alarm Player and he's off on the first round. He's looking a bit green around the gills, don't you think Lucinda?



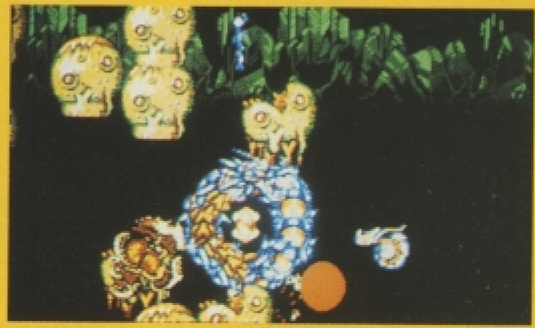
... And he's now reached the first hurdle and Gad! He's gone and hiccupped and burnt down the jump with his fire breath! Most unorthodox.



Next here's the spook alien mollusc wall and... and... he's riding straight through them! Oooh dear, that's a definite four faults for the promising young rider from Ullapool.



Well, that was a rather crap performance, wasn't it Lucinda? But Groblephet's trying to impress the judges with his dressage skills. That's a rather impressive loop... but shouldn't the rider have been inside it?



Oh Good lord, he's 'thrown' the rider! (*Lucinda's voice*). Er... actually he's been killed.

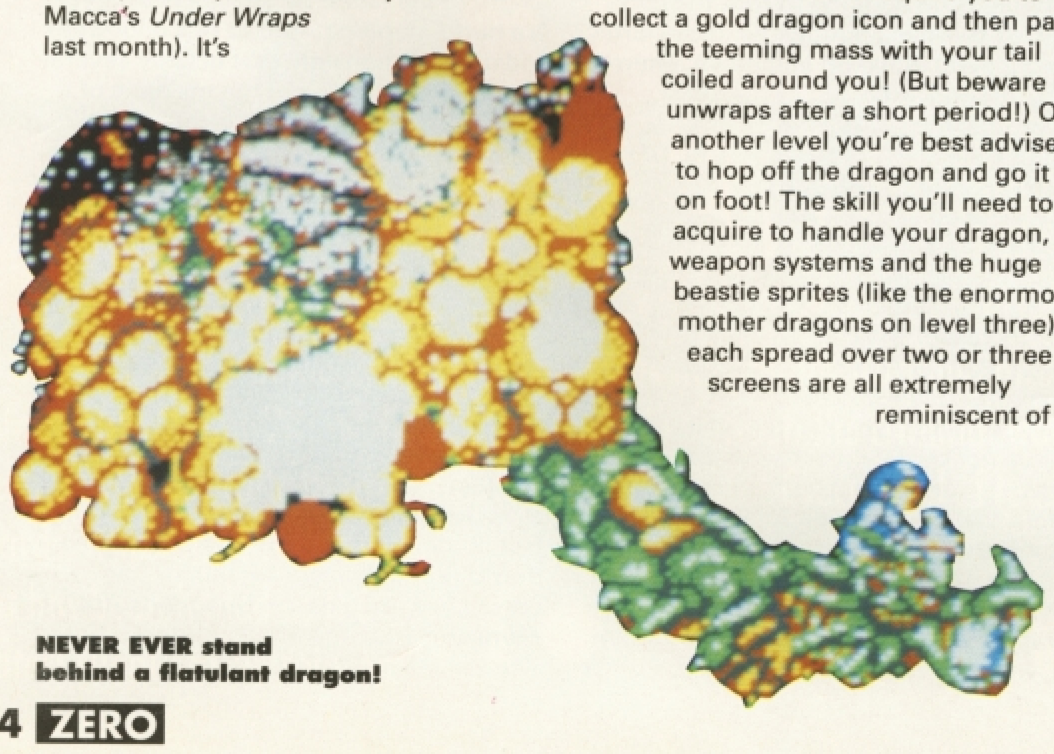
ST

David: Back in the heady days of ZERO issue one, Matt Beilby reviewed this baby in our *Dosh Eaters* section. You could say he was rather taken with it – he scored it a maximum five out of five invaders and predicted confidently that it would be a number one on all formats for Christmas 1990! Will it fare so well in reality or will Matt owe me a fiver? Let's have a looksie.

Dragon Breed has been coded by Arc Developments – the guys behind US Gold's *Forgotten Worlds* (but then you'll probably know this if you read Macca's *Under Wraps* last month). It's got all six arcade levels (I know *R-Type* had eight levels, but all Irem games have six these days) and a large multitude of sprites have been drawn from the arcade originals. Similarly, Arc have done a good job of recreating the coin-op's gameplay. Apart from the depth of weapons and dragon control, you can see the hallmark of the company that brought you *R-Type* in the style of gameplay. You'll learn from your mistakes as you employ different techniques to proceed through the various stages. Sometimes you'll encouter sheer walls of aliens which'll require you to collect a gold dragon icon and then pass the teeming mass with your tail coiled around you! (But beware it unwraps after a short period!) On another level you're best advised to hop off the dragon and go it on foot! The skill you'll need to acquire to handle your dragon, its weapon systems and the huge beastie sprites (like the enormous mother dragons on level three) each spread over two or three screens are all extremely reminiscent of *R-Type* and this is no bad thing.

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Time doesn't drag-on with only one disk

Dragon Breed is also a well programmed game with the ST working its little socks off to bring you smooth scrolling one and a half screen deep action with huge detailed sprites. However where *Dragon Breed* falls down for me, is in comparison to that other recent dragon coin-op conversion, the Sales Curve's *St Dragon*. *St Dragon* works on very similar principles but is much smoother, has a much better feel to the control of the dragon, has busier screens and smaller but much slicker graphics. I enjoyed the challenge of gameplay in *Dragon Breed* but unfortunately for Activision with these two games appearing in the shops together I know which I'd rather buy. STOP



NEVER EVER stand behind a flatulant dragon!

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	83
S	SOUND	85
A	ADDICTIVENESS	83
E	EXECUTION	85

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

Great shoot 'em up action with complex weapons and control systems but lacking in polish.*

87

* actually the dragon's grandparents hail from Warsaw


ENTER FIRST INTO BATTLE... LAST TO LEAVE
Battle Command
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Set in the near future, as an alternative reality, BATTLE COMMAND is an arcade/strategy game in which the player controls a single "MAULER" Assault Tank in one of 16 scenarios (missions) in the ultra war, fought between two dominant races in the NEW WORLD. The latest phase of the North/South war has been going on for over 10 years, with a stalemate eventually developing - a standoff between armies massed over a long dug-in battlefront. Such are the defensive capabilities of each side, full scale attacks are suicidal, so any offensive moves are, by necessity, small "behind the lines" actions performed by elite troops in specially designed vehicles. The Mauler is the latest such machine - capable of being lifted in and out of hostile territory by fast stealth choppers and armed with the most advanced weaponry the Northern scientists can devise.
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UNDER WRAPS

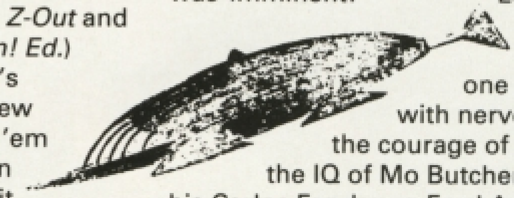
Z-OUT

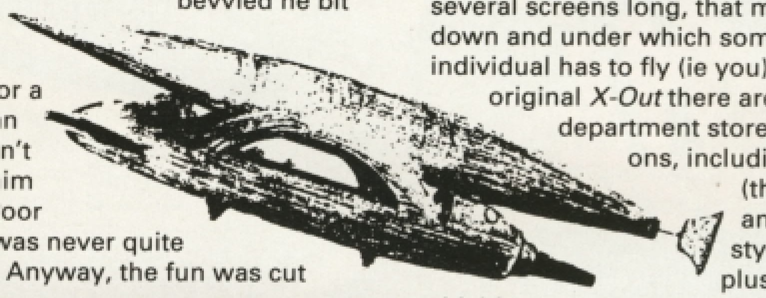


What was hotter than hot when it appeared in our February issue, won awards left right and centre – including the coveted ZERO Hero – and came from those Teutonic Technobods at Rainbow Arts? That's right, it was *X-Out*. Well guess what? Here comes the sequel, and er... it's called *Z-Out*. (Er... but it might not be, they haven't decided yet!) *David Wilson* or *Dave Wilso* (he hasn't decided yet) took a closer look.

X*-Out* was pretty darn good, wasn't it? So good in fact that Rainbow Arts has a sequel up its sleeves, *Z-Out*. (Surely it would have been a better marketing ploy to have called *X-Out*, *A-Out*. That way there would have been room for 25 sequels – *B-Out*, *C-Out*, etc. As it stands, after *X-Out* comes *Z-Out* and then what?) (*Stop whittering on! Ed.*) Anyway, whatever it's called, it's promising to give us a whole new bundle of state of the art shoot 'em up action. *X-Out* may have been heavily inspired by *R-Type* but it was underwater, wasn't it? So it was different. Er... *Z-Out* is also inspired by *R-Type* but it has to be different from *X-Out*, so it's set in space. Um... the gist of this is that *Z-Out* looks remarkably like *R-Type* in a *Denaris* sort of a way.

'Remember the victory celebrations for the success of the mission *X-Out* which annihilated the satellite of the planet Alpha Centauri?' asks the press release. Boy, how could we forget!? What a party that was, hee hee – Bertie got so bevvied he bit those sheeps' testicles for a bet... damn sheep didn't half kick him though! Poor bounder was never quite the same. Anyway, the fun was cut short by the discovery of intense activity on the actual planet itself. It looked like they were having a party of their own – a sort of 'let's get an absolutely huge force of vicious space ships and go and duff up these Earthling basts' party. Attack was imminent! Lummocks. The time was ripe for one brave man with nerves of steel, the courage of a lion, and the IQ of Mo Butcher to hop into his Carlos Fandango Ford Anglia of a space fighter craft. (That's where you enter, stage left.)





Still, never mind all that, just check out these graphics. The first level doesn't look too busy but don't let this lull you into a false sense of security – the later levels look brilliant. All the graphics are rich in colour and detail and are very reminiscent of the *Aliens* artwork of that weird Swiss artist H R Geiger. Very similar to *R-Type* is the level with enormous mother (mutha) ship sprites, several screens long, that move up and down and under which some hapless individual has to fly (ie you). As in the original *X-Out* there are whole department stores full of add-ons, including droids (that operate in an *R-Type* style, hem hem) plus satellite shields to protect your top and belly, and also hugely devastating firepower. Check this shopping list out: the beam, bouncing flames, double/triple shot, satellite rotation, ground attack doofers, and a streaker (it says here!).

The gameplay looks as though it's going to be jolly hard, so you may be pleased to hear of the innovative and welcome addition of a two player 'team' option. Other attractive features include six huge levels, and horizontal and vertical parallax scrolling with animation running at 50 frames per second. Gad!

The rather attractive *Aliens* level (number four) lets you fight both under and over water. But watch out for those huge wibbly-wobbly jelly fish. They're not as cute as they look!



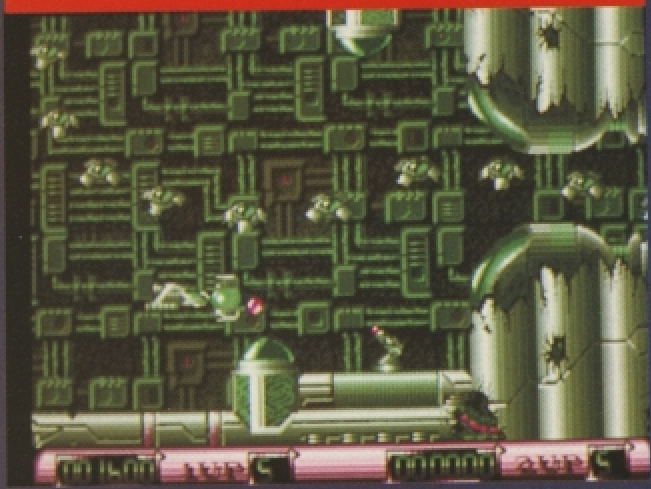
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Z-Out
PUBLISHER	Rainbow Arts
PRICE	£19.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	November

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE

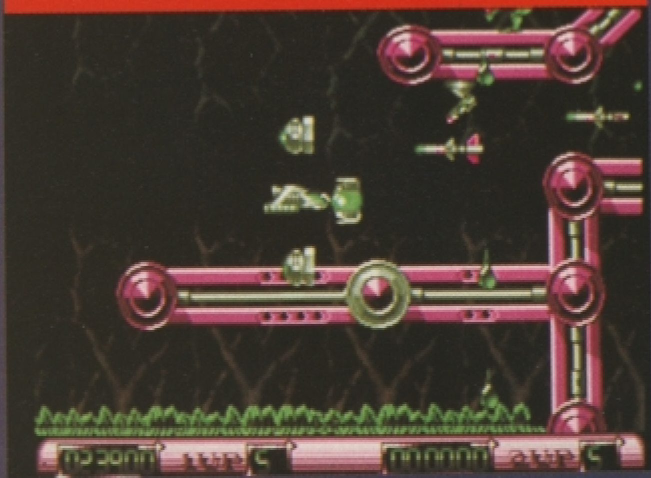
In a rather crap idea for a level by level guide (and also for a TV show) *Lloyd Grossman* goes 'Threw The Keyhail' to be snide in a horrid trans-Atlantic accent about the decor of *Z-Out*.

LEVEL ONE



This hays a mecharnical motife. Machieenery graphics are de rigeur in this location with little mechahnical creations orl over. Hi-tech barck-drops compliment the technology of your crahft.

LEVEL TWO



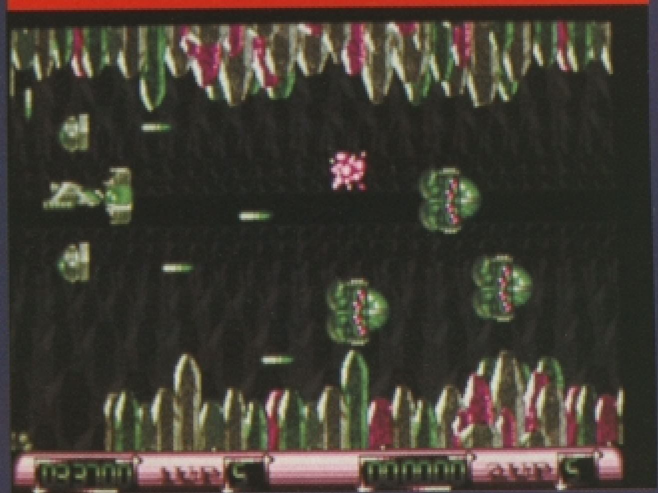
Mooveng orn to level tyoo, we find a relahxing pastoral feel to the place. Landscapes, trees and other greenery abound as you blahst your whey in this back-to-nature ecological theme-scape.

LEVEL THREE



We're in a beeyootiful roelling landscape with tumultuious mountains thrusting into the shaded horizon. You'll have to goide your crahft around mountainous obstacles in the foreground tyoo.

LEVEL FOUR



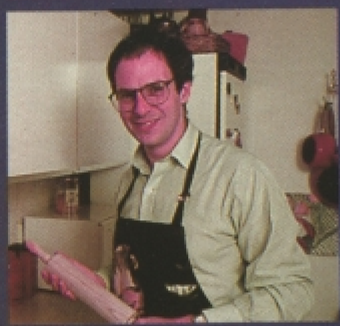
From the pastoral sorlitude of the previous level, suddenly we're cast into a plethera of colour, a sparkling foirework display of crystaline level detail above and below you. I find it remeniscent of a New Orleans fyooneral – so much voibrancy and colour in the midst of death and sadness.

LEVEL FIVE



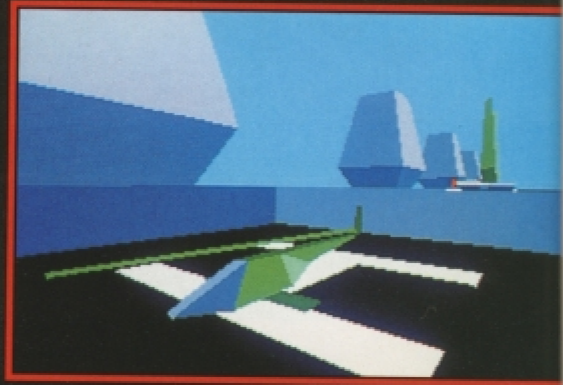
This level is partially flooded. It's also the first 'Aliens' level with beeyootifully detailed Gieger type graphics decorating the backdrawps. Look out for the unfreiendly little chaps on the ground with rawther tasteless little jaws within jaws that pop aout at yew as you floy past.

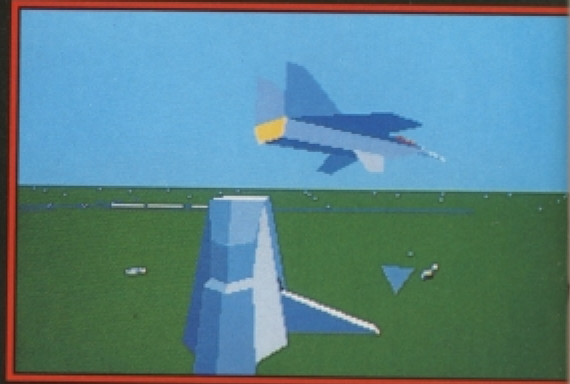
LEVEL SIX

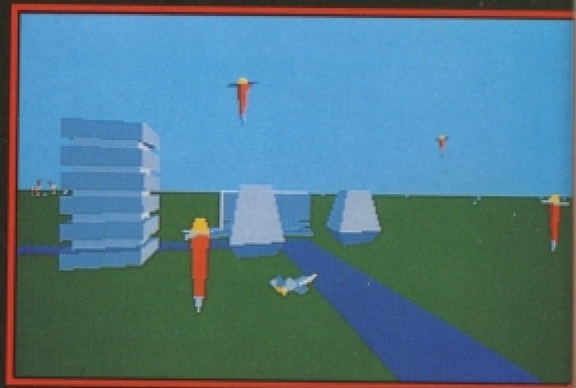


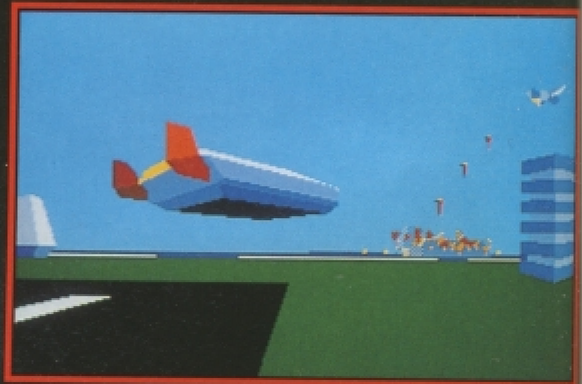
Ed's voice: *"That's quite enough, Mr Grossman, I can't stand your irritating accent any longer."* But I Hairvn't shewn the readers level six yet. *"I don't care, you're droiving me maird. Oh no! I've started now! Look, level six is the aforementioned giant motherships level. You'll have to fly under and over the ship before entering inside it and blowing it to bits!"* Lloyd Grossman's voice: Owe sord this for a geym of soeldiers, I'm goeing bahck to *Mahsterchef*...











ARMOUR-GEDDON

Post-Holocaust: A power crazed entity desires control of earth. They develop an energy beam and intend to bounce it off a custom-built satellite back to earth . All unprotected life will be wiped out.

You select and control up to six diverse hi-tech vehicles at once in a race against time to seek and destroy enemy power lines and eventually knock out their beam generator.

Build up your arsenal by collecting enemy resources to help develop and create your own new weapon systems.

Featuring a sophisticated head-to-head serial link enabling 'being-there' realism between two players.

Armour-Geddon: Strategy and simulation synthesized to perfection.

Screen Shots from the Amiga version.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

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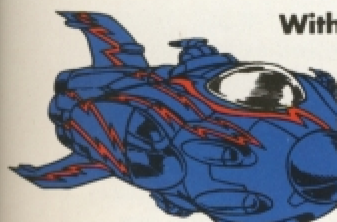
Access VISA

BUCK ROGERS

COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY

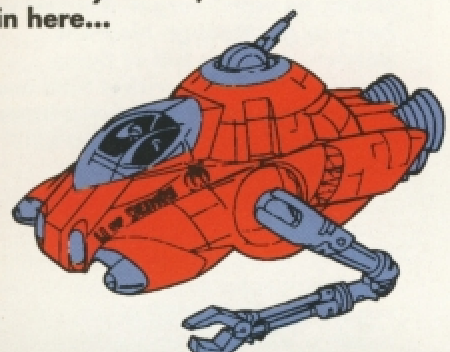


Tzapp! Bidibidibidibidibidibidi! Since *Tim Ponting* has been frozen in suspended animation from the neck up for the past five hundred years anyway, he knows just how it feels to be *Buck Rogers*...



With a name like Russo-American Mercantile, you wouldn't really expect RAM to be an association of Southern French vineyard owners – and it's not! These people are actually the despotic rulers of the Solar System in the 25th Century! Spook! Buck Rogers, ace pilot of 1990 who ejected from his spaceplane in an experimental cryogenic ejector seat (the dork), has awoken after 500 years to join forces with the New Earth Organisation against RAM domination. Yes, it's the crap TV series all over again. With his "tactical genius and fearless daring", Buck sets about liberating Earth from its oppressors. Stealing a squadron of top RAM spacefighters, he attacks the orbiting weapons platform 'Gauntlet' and takes control.

Anyway, to cut a corny story short, Buck manages to boot RAM off mother Earth and now everyone wants to join NEO. You're one of these glamour seekers – or several in fact, as you control a team of up to six adventurers. At a NEO presentation for new recruits at the spaceport, all hell suddenly breaks loose – RAM have launched a surprise attack. (Except it isn't a surprise any more.) Your adventures begin here...



HASSLE FACTOR: 0
More options than an Endowment Mortgage

PC

Tim: The *Buck Rogers* RPG system is loosely based on its *AD&D* forbear, so if you're familiar with Spig Of The Whastes Of Elfin-buttocks and all that twaddle you'll find no problem adjusting to role-playing in the 25th Century.

Countdown To Doomsday consists of a series of linked but discrete adventures that lead on from one another. The scene is set using a series of static 'comic book' graphics with captions before you're plunged into a *Dungeon Master*-style 3D view of your surroundings. A basic view-from-above map can be called up in certain scenarios. When combat occurs, the viewpoint changes to a detailed isometric view. Your characters appear as little sprites and you give orders and direct the action by means of keyboard/mouse/joystick commands. Sadly, the graphics are a bit dicey which is annoying mainly because the isometric views are so much better. Why wasn't the *whole* thing done from this viewing angle in the first place? But that aside, the game works well. *Buck Rogers* is, in fact, better than its *AD&D* counterparts. The character generation section is complicated but, once you get the hang of spending 'skill points', it becomes a pleasure rather than a drag.



The scenarios cover a broad range – including space exploration and combat. Travel around the Solar System is similar to Origin's *Space Rogue* though combat is handled at a tactical rather than arcade level. In fact the whole game is pretty challenging. Shandy drinkers can lower the difficulty level, but the characters will receive fewer experience points, improve their skills more slowly and get mangled sooner because they're so crap.

Overall, *Buck Rogers* is excellent value: when it claims a playing time of 40 –100 hours, it's true! But don't read the 'free' novel unless you're feeling particularly masochistic... STOP

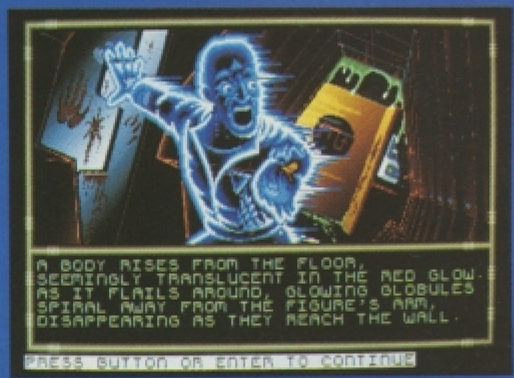
WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Buck Rogers
PUBLISHER	SSI/US Gold
PRICE	£34.99/£29.99
FORMAT	PC/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

GRAPHICS 84	ADDICTIVENESS 91	OVERALL 86
SOUND 71	EXECUTION 83	

MAKING A FAST ROGERS

A bunch of space cadets stumble across a deserted ship floating amid a cloud of galactic detritus. Will they survive long enough to see another series of *Lost In Space* reruns? And do you care?



Blimey! He's eaten too many baked beans by the look of things. And why have I developed a rash on my leg? Why is everyone falling into a coma?



Lawks! These 'large experimental combat gennies' seem to disagree with my political views. Um, I don't think we should have joined the European Exchange Rate Mechanism... Argh!



Erm, I think deserted spaceships aren't really my bag after all. Let's try space travel instead. Now what was the postcode of that asteroid?



Oh no! I'm in a space battle and there aren't even any knobs to twiddle. Erm... does anyone know how to mend a nuclear reactor with a couple of hairpins and a can of flea spray?

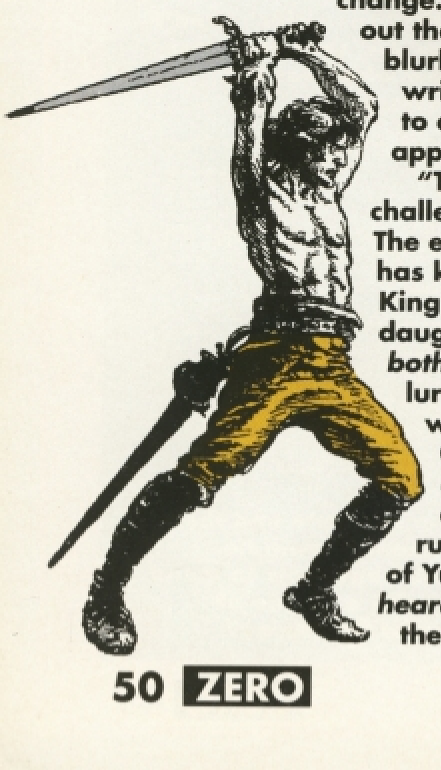
GOLDEN AXE



A quick leg-up, a thrash on the buttocks and you'll be out of here in no time.

An introduction to a ZERO review must contain four things: (1) The name of the game, (2) The company that's bringing it out (3) A 'joke', and (4) The name of the person writing the review. So here goes. (1) *Golden Axe,* (2) Virgin, (3) Er, er, er, er, erm... (4) *Duncan '3 out of 4 ain't bad' MacDonald.*

Writing 'scenario blurbs' for the backs of computer game boxes must be money for old rope, don't you think? Especially when the game in question is a horizontally scrolling beat 'em up which is a conversion of a Japanese arcade game. Here's how they always go – somebody's been kidnapped and you have to go and rescue them. It's as simple as that – it's just the names that change. So, let's check out the *Golden Axe* blurb and see if the writer has decided to opt for a new approach.



"Take the challenge! *(Nice start.)* The evil Death Adder has kidnapped the King *(ah-ha)* and his daughter *(blimey, both of them?)* and is lurking in his lair with the precious Golden Axe *(oh dear)*. Only you can rescue the rulers of the land of Yuria *(never even heard of it)* and set their people free. But can you battle through the six levels of this action packed quest? *(Probably not if you're a bit crap.)* Use magic to blast your enemy; slash and hack with your trusty weapon *(oo-er)* – or climb onto the back of a fire-breathing Bizarrian to deal death to the foe. Hectic combat action awaits you..."

And that appears to be that. Pretty self-explanatory really, wouldn't you agree? But not exactly what I would call a gripping read. Anyway, it's my turn now. Er, for starters, what on earth is a fire-breathing Bizarrian? And how the devil do you use magic? And what sort of people/creatures will be trying to stop you reaching the final screen? All these questions will be duly answered if you can be bothered to read on.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Golden Axe
PUBLISHER	Virgin
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

FUTURE SCENARIOS FOR BEAT 'EM UPS

NO.1: GET BRIAN

A rather dodgy bloke called Brian has pranged your motor. He apologises, gives you his insurance details, clambers into his Ford Capri and drives off. The following day you discover that his insurance company has never heard of him. Enquiries at the police station reveal that the car he was driving was stolen. You take your own car to a garage and they inform you that it'll cost you £320 to replace your offside front wing, unless you have it panel-beaten back into shape, which will cost £208.36.

You are less than ecstatic about this, and vow to find Brian and take it out of his hide. Brian is hiding in a maisonette in Aberdeenshire, but is guarded by hundreds of henchmen, all wielding baseball bats and riding strange horned lizards from the fifth dimension. Will revenge be yours? Probably not. But as you fight to the death, remember one thing: thanks to Brian you're out of pocket to the tune of just over two hundred and eight quid!!!

NO. 2. THE RETURN OF BRIAN

Having given Brian a damn good thrashing in the prequel, you wake one sunny morning, to discover that someone has smashed in your windscreen. It's obviously a revenge attack by Brian.

Inquiries at the police station reveal that Brian is now living in a large-ish semi in the mystical land of Cardiff. You have to teach him a lesson he won't forget. But first you have to get through his front garden, which is full of fierce warriors wielding cricket bats and riding even stranger horned lizards from the fifth dimension. So take the challenge...

NO. 3. BRIAN STRIKES AGAIN!

Driving along in your car, happy that you broke Brian's nose in the sequel *The Return Of Brian*, you chuck a left and trundle down to Brighton, where you're going to have a picnic. All of a sudden, a car veers out of a hidden side turning and shunts your car in the side, virtually writing it off. In the car that hit you, you see not only Brian, but nine hundred masked henchmen with hammers and quite a few reptiles from a dimension different to ours. Will you... *(Sniiiip! That's enough about Brian. Ed.)*



As Ax begins a fierce battle with a hermaphrodite, Tyris runs for the No. 29.

Dunc: First off, especially for arcade fiends who've been waiting for the home-computer version of *Golden Axe* to hit the streets, I'll say that Probe Software (the coders) have done rather a good job in keeping things pretty close to the original – but I'll add that the original itself never struck me as being particularly awe-inspiring in the first place, so maybe it wasn't all that hard. Still, fans of the arcade version can now 'peel off' as they already know all about the gameplay and just needed to know if the conversion was crap or not. (It's not.) So, as they disappear into the middle distance it's time for anyone who's left.

Okay, at the start of the game you get to choose to be one of three characters (and at any point a friend – if you have any – can join in, playing one of the two characters you've left). Character one is Ax Battler, who, as you probably guessed from his name, is a fierce barbarian. His 'speciality' is Volcano Magic (I'll get to the magic in a minute). Character two is Gilius Thunderhead, who's a dwarf. Apparently (so it says in the blurb), Gilius will commit suicide after killing Death Adder (he's obviously listened to too many Judas Priest albums). Oh, and his 'speciality' is Lightning Magic. Last but by no means least we come to Tyris Flare, the sprite with bosoms – the chick. She's an Amazon warrior queen and her 'speciality' is Fire Magic.

Right, the magic then. As well as hacking with their weapons, each character can bring death or injury to everything currently on the screen by summoning magical forces. However, to do this they need to collect magic pots, which are obtained by kicking roaming elves up the botty (the elf drops a pot and disappears off the screen). Pots, basically, are power-ups for each character's particular form of magic. Get one pot and use a spell, and the results aren't particularly devastating. Get six, however, and it's carnage city. The elves, though, are few and far between, so you can't go totally bonkers with the magic spells – it's best to save them up and use your weapon for most of the fighting.



Blimey, big trubs and not a Bizarrian in sight. I bet three turn up at once.

The fighting then. Well, as is usual in these things, there are hordes of different enemy sprites, but they only tend to come at you two at a time. Some are weedier than Joey 'New Kids On The Block' McIntyre, while others are about eight zillion times more vicious than Nigel Benn would be if you knocked his pint over and called him a poof. In a nutshell, the difficulty level's pitched quite nicely – progress isn't impossible, but it's not easy either.

In most beat 'em ups, weapons dropped by the enemy are pick-uppable. In *Golden Axe* they can be sat upon and ridden – because for weapons, read Bizarrian. Bizarrians are beasts of burden, and there are several different breeds. Topple a Bizarrian rider from his saddle and you can mount the animal yourself and take control. You might be riding a real pedigree which can spurt fireballs from its mouth. Or you might be riding a moth-eaten mongrel that's only got a crappy club on the end of its tail. But either way, it's good news, as while 'on board' a Bizarrian you don't get hurt.



Gilius Thunderhead, dwarf and part-time orthodontist, demonstrates the ancient art of toothpulling.

The *Golden Axe* action scrolls, in stages, from the right to the left – kill the residents of one screen and an arrow appears telling you that you can move on to the next. And that, basically, is that. Lots of different (and nicely drawn) backdrops are spread over the six levels, the animation of the sprites is quite acceptable if not mind-blowing, and everything is easy to see and there's no confusion. So, the verdict. Well, fans of the genre aren't going to be disappointed, lots to kill and, er, lots to kill. And spells too. But, as I said, I never reckoned the coin-op was that fantastic in the first place – just sort of slightly better than average. Therefore I'll give the game, er, six. (Only joking.)

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
Every now and again there's a disk accessing pause. It's only for a second or two, though.

THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	83
S	SOUND	85
A	ADDICTIVENESS	85
E	EXECUTION	83

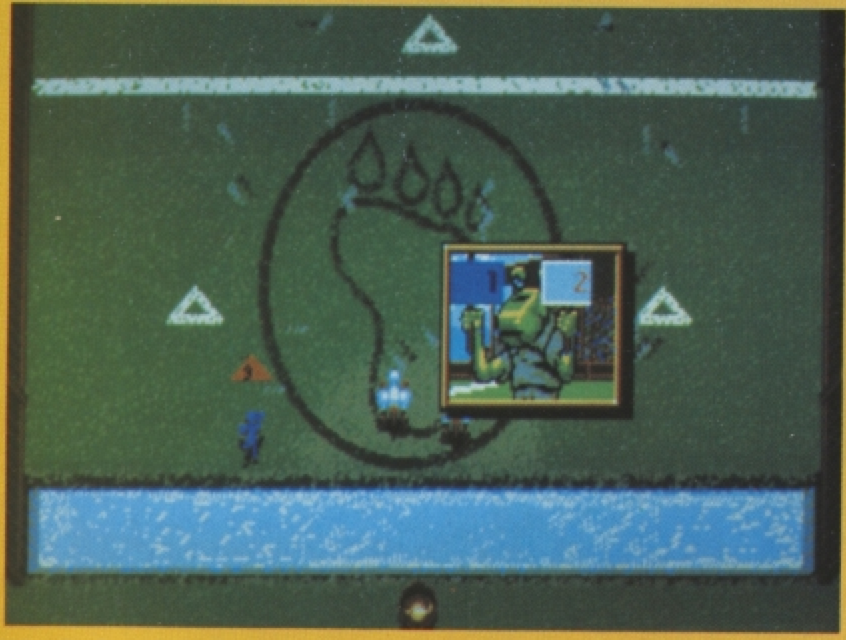
• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

A very good conversion of a slightly wibbly coin-op.

83

M.U.D.S.

Rainbow Arts' new future sports game is Mean, Ugly and Dirty, so mean and ugly ZERO aristocrat, *Paul Lakin*, didn't wash for a week before reviewing it.



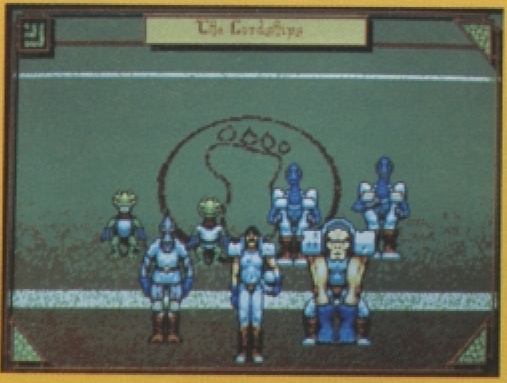
Watch the pitch deteriorate as the Lordships concede a goal.

Modern day career opportunities for a pterodactyl are, let's be frank, fairly limited. If that pterodactyl is of the Flonk variety and thus incapable of flight, there's no option but to consign it to the dustbin of failed evolution. But wait. Evolution doesn't make mistakes (except in the case of Dave Lee Travis) and soon the Flonk's hour will come. They might make lousy dinosaurs but if you're looking for something to throw into a wooden barrel then a Flonk is the thing for you.

Since throwing things into barrels is a crucial part of the future sport *M.U.D.S.* (Mean Ugly Dirty Sport), this is rather fortunate. *M.U.D.S.* is not unlike rugby in the same way as a three megaton nuclear device is not unlike gunpowder. On pitch scraps are not unknown in rugby; in *M.U.D.S.* such punch ups are not only legal, they're positively encouraged. If you don't want to win a game by scoring more goals than your opponents then you can win by simply annihilating them.

As manager of a *M.U.D.S.* team, you have a baffling range of species from which to select your players, ranging from the small and athletic Wizzles to the armour plated Knarack. You can even pick a human, though they're not terribly reliable and don't look half as nice as Wizzles.

Although it can simply be played as a one off game, *M.U.D.S.* also offers a campaign option. This enables you to travel the world competing with teams in other cities. Different cities provide you with different playing enviroments including ice, swamps and ultimately a volcano. Each city offers the possibility of winning loads of spondulicks, especially if you possess the confidence to bet on your own team. There's also the possibility of loads of trouble. Your team have to be kept fit and they'll also need food and accomodation between matches. When you're not training the team, loitering round the Player Market (oo-oer) or spending anxious moments in the Hospital, then you can unwind in the pub. While you're there you can dabble in a bit of bribery and gossip. Taking part in *M.U.D.S.*, an evening in the pub can easily end in a punch up. After all, why wait for the beginning of the game when you can nobble the opposition the night before?



The Lordships, eh? I bet they got whupped with the wizzle stick.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	M.U.D.S.
PUBLISHER	Rainbow Arts
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Late November

PC

Paul: A shark ate my Wizzle and no one cares! He was a really nice Wizzle called Baff Azuhiz. The team's top scorer and the fastest thing on two legs – yet he had to end up as elevenses for a finned maniac. *M.U.D.S.* is a cruel sport but if I ever meet the person who decided to put a shark infested river in front of each goal, I'll... I'll... well I'll be jolly angry.

Such traumas are, of course, all in a day's work for a *M.U.D.S.* manager. Perhaps this is why the game works much better in campaign mode than single contest. There are plenty of sports games which involve the training, buying and selling of players. However, the need to find your players accomodation between matches, register for and arrive at games in time while keeping an eye out for the debt collectors is all fairly novel. It's also fairly well executed with simple icon clicking.



If, after twenty-six free beers, this is the best tip a Wizzle can offer, then tell him to flonk off!

After a while, the routine in each town gets a bit samey but as debts rise and that lucrative victory still eludes you, the pressure mounts up.

Once the action gets onto the pitch, *M.U.D.S.* stumbles a bit. The game is imaginative and slightly reminiscent of the football match in *Bedknobs And Broomsticks*. Unfortunately the graphics aren't quite good enough, making the action a little unclear. I also found the control system a tadge frustrating. During a match you control one player, though you can change which player it is during the course of a game. However, attempts to pass or shoot often seemed to result in me changing player while attempts to change player seemed to result in nothing very much. That said, I quite enjoyed the games even if I didn't feel completely in control. *(So what's new, Lakin? Ed.)*

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Totally clean of hassles

M.U.D.S. is a nice idea which may well work a lot better on ST and Amiga. However, even on PC, it's good dirty fun.

STOP

GRAPHICS	80	ADDICTIVENESS	83
SOUND	70	EXECUTION	82

OVERALL 82





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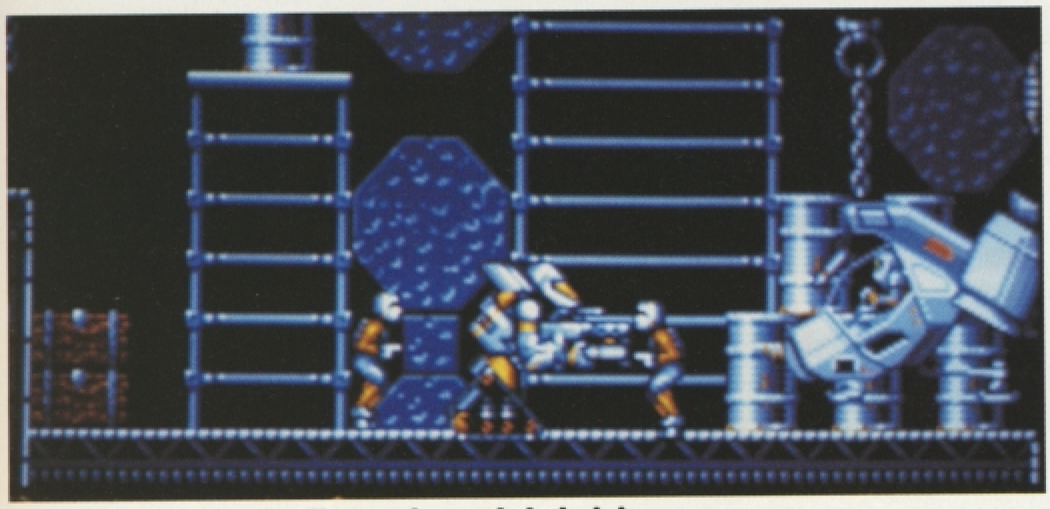
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STRIDER II

Show *Paul Lakin* a dangerous shoot 'em up and he'll show you a clean pair of heels. However we managed to coax him out from behind the settee to have a look at *Strider II.*



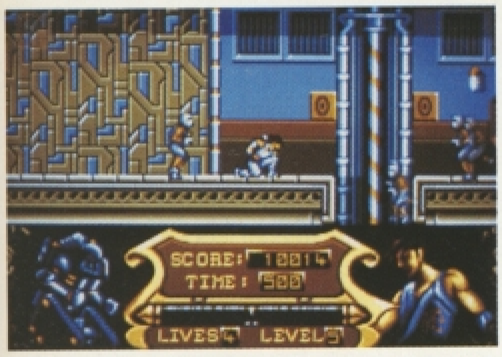
Right, now come and call me a leotard clad ninja pansy.

When the President of The Council Of Man is captured by invading aliens it's inevitable that some hero is going to have to go to her rescue. Firstly, because she's an IIP (Immensley Important Person). Secondly, and rather inevitably, because she's the most beautiful thing to happen to politics since Cleopatra. This rather begs the question what do unattractive, unimportant people do when they're in trouble? Learn to look after themselves presumably.

The Council's forces have located the base where the President is held. Good work. In their wisdom they've decided to attack it with a supervirus that'll wipe out any lifeform it comes into contact with. Not so sure about that one, lads. Not exactly subtle, is it? Perhaps the President wasn't all that popular after all. Showing great restraint, the Council have agreed to postpone the attack for six hours. This gives you a little time (six hours in fact) to battle through five levels of baddies and rescue the President.

There are two possible approaches to the rescue operation. Shandy drinkers will search the whole of each level picking up icons and points so that when they confront the end of level nasty they miraculously change into an armour-plated robot. The more heroic amongst us will knock back a bottle of Russian Vodka then rush as quickly as possible to the end of level. You buys your shandy, you takes your choice.

Apart from the new 'robot look', Strider has also gained a new weapon. He still carries his trusty laser sword of course but he now packs a gun to sort out those aliens who are a little backward in coming forward. This aside, fans of the original *Strider* will find themselves in the familiar territory of a horizontally scrolling beat 'em up. It's all action, all danger with an ever so slightly naughty ending to boot. (Or whatever it is you do to naughty endings.)



There's obviously no escape - unless I can slide down that straw into the glass of milk below.



Climb up here for a head start. Head - joke, geddit? Ho ho.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Strider II
PUBLISHER	US Gold
PRICE	To be announced
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Late November

Paul: It's getting harder and harder to pigeonhole games these days. Partly because the boxes are getting bigger so they don't fit in the hole but mainly because game styles are getting increasingly mixed. Shoot 'em ups now tend to have adventure elements while adventure games increasingly have a token slice of shoot 'em up action. There are even rumours that adventure supremo Mike Gerrard is thinking of shaving while arch shoot 'em up psychopath 'Macca' McCandless is trying to grow a beard (with precious little success).

People who like to know where they stand with both their games and their facial hair will welcome the arrival of *Strider II*. There's no namby pambying about with other styles here. *Strider II* is a shoot 'em up, pure and simple. You progress through the game, you pick up bonuses and you kill people. No room for any doubt there.



Not more bloody Ramblers.

There's also no doubt that *Strider II* is a sequel to *Strider*. I mean there's the name for starters, a bit of a giveaway that one. Also the whole look and feel of the game is almost identical to that of the original. The main sprite is agile (if a bit too sensitive to joystick nudges) and neatly animated, and the backgrounds are colourful and detailed. Scrolling is smooth, the sound is a bit crap and the game is crammed with baddies.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Very little waiting around

Strider was a good and popular game; there's a lot to be said for sticking to a tried and tested formula. However, I can't help feeling that the sequel is a bit *too* similar. Instead of being an improvement on the original game, this is just a rehash. It's good but not terribly special.

The same cannot be said of the President of the Council Of Man. I'm not sure exactly what her plans are for the socio-economic development of the planet. However, she certainly introduces a welcome air of... erm... informality to the usually stuffy world of politics. STOP

GRAPHICS 82	ADDICTIVENESS 84	OVERALL 81
SOUND 69	EXECUTION 83	


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Screen Shots from Atari ST version

GREMLINS 2





Is that a cup of water in your pocket (hem) or are you just pleased to feed me?

After a midnight feast in the dorm, *Teresa 'yum, yum, yum' Egerton* (née *Maughan*) went skinny dipping and, well, we won't go into what happened later... Suffice to say – remember *Gremlins*?

Gremlins, eh! What would the workman of today do without them? On diagnosing the broken washing machine... "Well madam, I reckon it's one of 'em Gremlins." And the TV repair man... "Don't titter missus but you've got a Gremlin in that there Toshiba." Well, I for one could do without them. But, no! We've had the broken ice cream maker, the book, the first film, the car that keeps conking out (David's Triumph Herald, I believe) and then *Gremlins 2*, the film. Now we've got Elite's game of the same name and it's not half bad... But enough of that. First, let's get on with the business of the scenario...

Many years have passed since the cuddly little Mogwai, Gizmo, got slightly moist and reproduced himself to the peaceful town of Kingston Falls. Now hero Billy and his bit of fluff, Kate, are working in the Clamp Plaza complex where they discover that Gizmo has been kidnapped from the Chinese store-keeper Mr Wing and is about to be used for scientific experiments.

Billy leaves Gizmo in a drawer while he's working until Kate can come and take the little beggar home. Unfortunately though, Gizmo escapes and gets wet again (well, it wouldn't be much of a story otherwise) and his hermaphrodite carryings-on produce four more Mogwai who ram poor Giz down an air vent and embark on a journey of yet more mischief, mayhem, death and destruction.

Can Billy stop the carniverous copulation and dispose of the evil Gremlins before they spill out over the streets of New York? Or will the Malicious Mogwais turn him into a thick shake? Well, don't ask us, that's up to you – 'cos you happen to have landed the part of Billy...



Sexygirl pouts forth with deadly kisses – after all, she does smoke 80 Capstan Full Strength a day.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Gremlins 2
PUBLISHER	Elite
PRICE	ST £19.99 Amiga/PC £24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

AMIGA

Teresa: You begin the game by alighting from an elevator that sounds just like the lift in *Star Trek* (Joke © Paul Lakin 1990) – only it deposits you in the complex and not the bridge. From this point on, you've got to total the Gremlins because they'll throw everything they've got at you – literally! Armed with your standard torch, you wouldn't think it would be a problem – well it is. There are at least ten different Gremlins, each with their own characteristics – like Daffy who hurls himself in a cartwheel at you and takes three shots to wipe out, Mohawk, who pops up anywhere and hurls whatever's at hand and Pogo who bounces up and down.

Along the way you can pick up bonus icons – for example a P gives you more points, R turns Gizmo into Rambo so he shoots everything on-screen, plus there are mystery ones too. You can also pick up different weapons – from Frisbies to Boomerangs, but beware the apples – they're crap! And if you complete a level, don't forget to pick up the end-of-level bonus, you'll need them later. You can buy weapons from here using the credits collected in the form of little bubbles whenever you slaughter a Gremlin.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
No worries!

Gremlins 2 features five horizontally scrolling levels and they're all bloody hard. It took me the equivalent of 180 episodes of *Neighbours* to reach the end of level one. There's no random element in the gameplay, so it's a case of learning when and where to shoot from.

Graphically it's a stunner: each of the Gremlins is yummily animated, from the cigar-smoking George to pouting Sexy-girl and her deadly tongue sarnies. Gremlins even appear on some of the little TVs in the complex and from within Microwaves. Sound is pretty nifty – I love the Gremlins' hyena cackles and the music and sound FX aren't bad either.

It all adds up to standard shoot 'em up arcade fare with some humorous touches and very good graphics. A witty interpretation of a film licence that's well worth a look, particularly for Gizmo (aaaaaaahhh) lovers!



GRAPHICS 81	ADDICTIVENESS 77	OVERALL 79	STOP
SOUND 80	EXECUTION 79		

BOXING CLEV

LUCAS GA





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"Enchanting...complex...captivating."— Game Players' Guide
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BIGGLES FLIES UNDONE



Armchair pilots, eh? The world's full of them. There they sit, joystick in one hand, mug of tea in the other, as they fiddle with their flaps and ailerons (and if that isn't worth an "oo-er" then we don't know what is). But is flying a real plane anything like flying a simulation? Well, we decided to find out. The ZERO armchair pilots were gathered together and each was made to pick a straw. The person who ended up with the short straw was to be given a day on Sublogic's *Flight Sim Four*, getting to grips with controlling a Cesna on the office PC. Then, the following day, they were to be booked into a flying club. Yup, the real thing. A flying lesson. Two hours in the air at the controls of a genuine Cesna. So, who drew the short straw? *Duncan "Stumpy Bader" MacDonald,* that's who. Here's his story.



DAY ONE – IN THE OFFICE

Brilliant (I don't think)! Yet another four billion page manual to digest. Ho hum. *(Several hours later.)* Aha! There's a feature in the simulation that allows you to opt for flying lessons. The computer pilot shows you how to do things – and you get text messages telling you what you're doing right and what you're doing wrong when you try to repeat his performance. So, I think I'll give myself some flying lessons straight away: and I may as well dive in at the deep end with lesson twenty (the loop)...

THE LOOP

"Climb to 6000 feet," says the computer instructor, "use down elevator to dive until airspeed reaches 200 knots then apply up elevator smoothly (but not too rapidly) to 75 per cent. Check your pitch orientation and as soon as you see blue sky, apply full throttle. When the loop is three quarters complete, bring the throttle back to idle to avoid over revving the engine. As you come out of the loop, level off and apply throttle to resume normal cruise flight." Oh dear, which is the elevator? (Sound of somebody pressing all the wrong buttons, stalling, going into a spin and crashing into the ground.)

TAXIING

Ahem. Lesson one then – taxiing. (Besides, I doubt whether I'll be expected to do loops in tomorrow's real lesson.) Hmm, looks simple enough. Keep the throttle back and use the rudder to move onto the runway. My



This flying malarky is a real banker...



Brilliant! I missed the dumpling! *(It's a hill actually. Ed.)*

turn then. Throttle on low and away we go. Not too fast now, not too fast. Oh no, I'm going too fast. Eh? Where's the runway gone? Yaargh, there's the sea! Brakes, brakes, brakes! Eeek, the brakes are totally crap and I've pressed the wrong button and put the throttle on full. Where's the engine cut-out? Where's the manual? Splash. Oh dear. *Falcon* was much easier than this.

STRAIGHT AND LEVEL

Lesson two – Straight And Level. This looks like a piece of cake. All I have to do is fly in a straight line. I just have to select an outside visual reference point and fly towards it at a particular height. Right, that skyscraper in the distance can be my reference point. (Two minutes later.) Eh? The plane's wibbling about and seems to be climbing. Must have hit an area of warm rising air. To the instruments then. Yo ho ho, my vertical speed indicator is pointing up, so I'll lower the nose to get it pointed down again. (Aeons pass while keyboard buttons are pressed and lower altitude regained.) Well, that's sorted that out then, time to check my marker out of the cockpit window then. Eh? Where's the bleeding skyscraper gone? Oh, there it is. Damn, I've got to turn again. Oh no, now the altitude's dropping. Bugger it!

TURNS

Lesson three – Turns. Well, I'm already having a 'funny turn' at the thought of tomorrow's real lesson. If things go as badly as they've been going so far on

the PC, then I'll be killed taxiing. "Turning," the on-screen SubLogic instructor smugly tells me, "involves close co-ordination of all three flight controls – ailerons, rudder and elevators." Damn it! It's that jargon again. I know where the rudder is, because it's in the same place as it is on a boat (sort of) – but where are the other two? (Sound of manual being flicked through.) Right, ready now. Hmmm, not too hard this, actually. Wheeeeeee! Oh dear, I've stalled, I'm in another spin and the instructor's telling me I'm crap. I know, I'll turn him off!

UPSIDE-DOWNIES

Lesson four – the, er... Um, actually it's up to me what lesson four is going to be, seeing as I've "turned the instructor off". What can I do now? I know, I'll have a bash at some upside-downy stuff. I'll select Final Approach from the menu (to save taking off, climbing and turning around) and then I'll fly inverted above the runway at 50 feet or so. A quick roll then. Yurk, that's the stuff. I'm now upside-down and the controls are reversed. Here comes the runway, closer, closer, closer. Push forward on the stick to steady the altimeter. There we go, steadyish at 50 feet. Good, eh? Uh? What's that? Oh no, another plane's coming in to land – I forgot to notify air traffic control that I was going to be pulling off this stunt. Mind you, I don't even know how to use the radio yet – I'd



I'm upside-down and everything's gone blue. Ah, the sea... Whoops!

better look it up quickly. (Sound of manual being flicked through as the Cessna smashes into an oncoming Lear Jet resulting in much carnage.) Oh dear.

THE DEBRIEFING

Ah well, that just about wraps up my "pre-flying lesson" flying lesson. Didn't do particularly well really, did I? And it doesn't auger too well for tomorrow, does it? In fact it would be quite a good idea if I worked on a stonker of an excuse to get out of going up altogether. Maybe if I said I suffered from vertigo and claustrophobia. Naah, no-one would give a toss. I know – I could say my Grandad had died and I had to go to all the way to Aberdeen to attend the funeral (except I've used that one about 80 zillion times before.) Nope, unfortunately there doesn't seem to be any way out of it. I suppose I'd better don my flying helmet and goggles then, and get in the mood. Tally ho!

DAY TWO – THE REAL THING



They'll never know I've got three wooden legs.

The drive to the flying club was great fun, and the Biggles gear certainly helped – I was pretending that my trusty old Camper was a zippy little orange Tiger Moth. I leant into every curve on the winding country road and pretended to machine-gun the oncoming traffic. Just think – in a few minutes I'd actually be doing it for real (except for the machine-gunning bit, of course). And, lo and behold, very soon a sign loomed large: "Aerodrome" it said. This was it then – yippee! Parking the van next to a plane I got out and strolled into the clubhouse, where there were loads of pilots 'talking shop' to one another. I dinged the bell at reception and was handed a form. "This is where you sign your life away," joked one of the flyboys. I looked at the form, and sure enough there were lots of references to death on it. Still, there was no backing down now, so I signed the thing and was frogmarched into a briefing room. Here I was joined by my instructor-to-be: Graham, a Kiwi who looked more like a rugby player than a pilot. "This is what we're going to be going up in," he announced, showing me a two foot long wooden model of an aeroplane. "It looks a bit small," I quipped nervously, instantly realising that he must have heard this pathetic 'gag' about a zillion times before. He then proceeded to show me how the



Car park at 3 o'clock, flaps down... Oh, the van's stalled.

ailerons worked, where the flaps were, what the trim tab did and explained (using chalk diagrams on a blackboard) about aerodynamics, drag, pitch, roll and yaw. (I was lost already.)

DRIVING ALONG THE GROUND

After the pre-flight checks, we both clambered aboard and belted up. "Ah! A cigarette lighter!" I said, pointing keenly to a pully-out thing. "It's the throttle," said Graham. "Ah," I replied. Things had started badly. Then Graham asked me to start the engine. Even this was quite confusing because there are about a billion different key-turn positions, but I somehow managed it and we were onto lesson number one – taxiing to the take-off spot. Graham pushed in the cigarette lighter to increase the prop speed and told me to disengage the brakes. (The brake pedals are situated above the rudder pedals, so you have to lift your feet in the air to reach them.) Then we started rolling. Graham was pointing at the take-off spot – I was meant to push



Argh! The altitude's made my left ear swell up.

the right brake to turn right and the left brake to turn left in order to get there. It sounds easy, but we were soon aimed in totally the wrong direction.

UP, UP AND AWAY

At last we were pointing down the grass runway. In the far distance there was a Bristow's student landing a helicopter rather badly. I made a slightly useless Mike Smith joke and Graham pushed the cigarette lighter home. The engine got louder, the plane lurched forward and with a trundle, trundle, bounce, woosh, we were shakily airborne. I wanted a go, I wanted a go. I wanted to do a loop the loop. I wanted to do a barrel roll. I wanted to fly upside-down at an altitude of eight feet. Graham was having none of this whatsoever and he climbed to about 2,000 feet. "Look over there – that's London," he said, pointing to a city skyline in the distance. "Cor. Er, where's that?" I asked, pointing to another (greenish) skyline to the right of London. "It's a hill" he replied.

YOU HAVE CONTROL

First of all I had to learn how to fly straight and level by looking out of the window (i.e. not spending my whole time staring at the altimeter). This is a

bit like learning the width of a new car – you have to know where the end of the Cessna's 'bonnet' should be in relation to the horizon. "You have control," said Graham, pointing the nose up a bit and taking his hands off his steering wheel thing. I had to push the steering wheel forwards to drop the nose to the position I felt was level flight. "I have control," said Graham, resuming control and pointing the nose of the plane down towards the ground. "You have control," he said again. Thanks a lot, I thought, pulling the control column back and flying roughly level again. Then Graham took control and spoiled my efforts a second time. Back to me again. Back to Graham again. Back to me again. Back to Graham again. It was a bit like a game of tennis actually – except there weren't any line-judges.

DO WHAT???

"Okay, you've got the hang of that," said Graham. The set of his eyebrow made me suspicious. I could tell he had an ace up his sleeve. "See that thing," he said, pointing to a little device situated where a gear stick in a Renault Four would be,



Aah... Clouds, sky, freedom... The ground rushing towards you at 120mph... What?!!

"That's the Trim Wheel." Yup, I was right. He'd served his first ace. There was a trim control in *Flight Sim Four*, but I hadn't bothered using it. It's used for climbing and descending. If you pull back on the control column the plane pitches up (obviously), but the trouble is that you have to strain a bit because the plane actually wants to go back down again. What you have to do for ease is set the trim tab (it's next to the elevators on the tailplane) so that there's no effort involved in holding the control column in place. So it was back to the tennis match again, with Graham giving me dodgy trim settings which I had to right again. While we were doing this, I suddenly remembered that I'd left the lights on in the van and asked Graham if it would be possible for me to parachute down and turn them off. He said no, and that it was time for banking lessons. *(Money-management tuition in a Cessna cockpit? Whatever next. Ed).*

DROPPING THE WING

Graham levelled the plane at 1,750 feet and showed me the compass – this was the moment I was dreading, as my sense of direction is non-existent. "Turn



Excuse me, does anyone know where Redhill Aerodrome is?

to a heading of fnnnfff fn fnnnf," he said. "What?" I asked, not being able to hear clearly through my headphones. "Crackle crackle seventy," came the reply. Oh dear. I gambled on 270° and dropped the left wing a bit. Hee hee hee. It felt pretty brilliant – I liked this turning lark. But we were losing height. "Pull back on the stick," suggested Graham. Aha! Of course. I did that on the PC, but forgot all about it in the reality of the Cessna cockpit. Graham took control and did a 'professional' bit of banking, dropping the right wing down so far that it was pointing at the ground. Urk – squiffy stomach time. Then it was my go again... and I wimped out, I'm afraid: dipping the left wing to a mind numbingly pathetic angle. Any observers on the ground would be wetting themselves with laughter at my expense. Curses! Lot's of banking practice later and, before I knew it it, was time for the next lesson.

TAKE THIS!

He let me have it with both barrels. It was tennis match "I have control, you have control" time again. Graham put the plane into a banked dive, changed the throttle setting and deliberately faffed up the trim wheel position. "You have control," he beamed. I was meant to straighten everything up and fly level at a certain altitude, and at a pre-requested speed. Fair enough, I thought, and steamed in. I decided it was time to show off. With one hand on the control column I brought the plane under control while simultaneously pulling back on the throttle until the needle on the rev counter got to the right spot. Then, checking the altimeter and seeing we had 300 feet to climb, I pulled back on the stick and faffed about with the trim wheel until the control column settled down. We were under control and climbing nicely. It was simply a matter of time before we gained the required altitude and I had to level off. "Excellently done," said Graham (except he didn't – er, I made that bit up actually.) No sooner had I levelled off than Graham had taken control again and plunged us into another banked dive – quite an alarming one as far as I was concerned. "You have control," he said. Some successes and some failures later, Graham checked his watch. It was already time to head back to the airfield. (Where I had an urgent appointment with a toilet.)

PUTTING THE KITE DOWN

Five minutes later and Graham pointed out the airfield in the distance, and said "You have control." The bastard! I wasn't expecting that – I thought my lesson was over. Palms sweating, I took the control column. The airfield was nearing. "I'll do all the work," said Graham, you just aim the plane at the ground." Things were getting nearer. Things were starting to speed up. Graham changed the throttle setting and put the flaps down: the aeroplane started juddering about all over the shop (it was quite a choppy day). When's he going to take control again? I wondered. A quick glance at Graham convinced me that he wasn't. The bastard! Oh well, I thought, if I die he dies too – and with this minor consolation at the back of my mind I gritted my teeth and watched the ground rise. Then "thud!!" – it was a slightly heavy landing, but the plane was on the ground. I was pretty chuffed, I can tell you. "Park the plane over there," said Graham, pointing to a couple of stationary planes near the clubhouse. And did I faff up the taxiing again? Er, yes, I did a bit as it happens. Still, I wasn't dead, so that was the main thing.



Ah! Bisto!

THE COMPARISON?



You won't be allowed in the air without *all* the following items.

Back to the point of the feature: is a simulation like the real thing? Well, yes, it is really. In fact in some respects the real thing is actually easier, because you're using more of your senses. The real thing is also a lot more fun – you can forget fairground rides. If you're good at flight sims, over17 and you've got a bit of spare cash then I thoroughly recommend you go and have a bash yourself. Don't forget the Biggles outfit, though, it's essential. STOP

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JAMES POND



No waiting around for Chris Patten to take action, James Pond, as a member of the Amphibian Green Party, makes environmental issues his mission.

I'd been herring rumours about something fishy happenin' at Millennium over the last few months but put it down to a load of old codswallop. Seems I was wrong because they've been hard at work creating a new Secret Agent, James Pond. But this 007 is a very different kettle of fish – in fact he *is* a fish!

He's a fish with a mission. Well, twelve to be precise. Each mission has a fishy, Bondy, ozone-friendly theme – the first is called *Licensed To Bubble*, the second *From Sellafield With Love* and so on. He must successfully complete all missions to defeat the evil scientist, Dr. Maybe, who has taken over the ocean and trapped all of Pond's friends and family and is threatening to give them a battering (hem). You as Pond must determine whether he's a fish or a prawn and whether he's got mussels or brawn.

At the beginning of each mission a message will scroll telling you what to do – in mission one for instance you must collect keys and swim to the lobster pots in order to release them. There are six lobsters and you must set at least four free before the lobster catchers get to them first. There's no time to mullet over either because you've got to get your skates on to beat the time limit which varies according to the mission. Things are made even more difficult by enemies (like dogfish, octopi, sharks etc.) who are looking to give you a good kick in the winkle! Still, at least Pondy comes equipped with his own bubble gun which catches the nasties in an air bubble enabling him to touch them to collect a bonus.



There are also heaps of other bonus objects to collect like potion bottles whose porpoise is to kill all baddies on-screen, clocks for extra time and hearts for an extra life. Others are not so helpful like bombs and glue pots. Plus there are secret caverns to discover which feature some goodies and some baddies, but make sure you're not following a red herring 'cos your fishometer will drop all the time whilst you explore. If it runs out you lose a life and you only have three lives altogether. So shaken or stirred, let's see how I seafared at the game. (*Cue Shirley Bassey*) Fish-finnnger... (da-na-na-*na*)... he's a maaan with the Midas touch...

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	James Pond
PUBLISHER	Millennium
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

Meet Pond, James Pond – he's licensed to brill in Millennium's aquatic arcade romp. *Teresa 'Miss Tunnypenny' Maughan* slipped a wetsuit on over her white tux and prepared for a whale of a time.

AMIGA

Teresa: James Pond has always been a bit of a hit with the girls but will he be a hit with the gills? The answer is – yes!

Nobody does it wetter than me – unfortunately when it comes to *James Pond*, eel admit it – I'm crap! I managed to complete the first mission but got carried away releasing lobsters just for the halibut and ran out of time. Having tried again I got onto the second level and was promptly turned into fishfingers. But even if you take into account this reviewer's lack of talent, it's got to be said – *James Pond* is a touch on the hard side. The trouble is that you've got a time limit to contend with as well as only having three lives. And when you finally kick the bucket you go all the way back to mission one which is a real pain in turbot.

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
Absolutely none. Honest to cod!

Criticism aside, I really enjoyed *James Pond* for what it was – a simple, addictive, fishy frolic with superb, animated graphics. In fact it must be said that graphically it's stunning – all



Whelkome to your pad. As you can see, there's no plaice like home!

the creatures and objects are beautifully animated and the backgrounds on every mission are completely different.

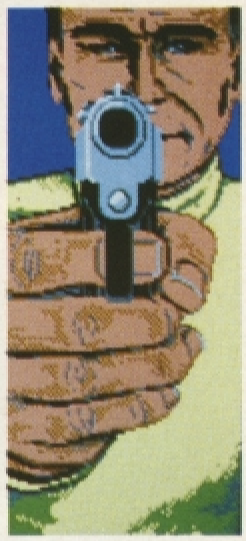
But to the best bit: the sound effects – they're fab! The title music is amazing and whilst playing the game you can select either a catchy little Bond number or the sound FX. Both are really effective and add to the whole ambience. On a scale (groan) of one to ten, *James Pond* has got to be worth an octopi. It's brill! And not a fish gag in sight!

GRAPHICS 87 | ADDICTIVENESS 83 | SOUND 84 | EXECUTION 79 | OVERALL 85

STOP

review

COVERT ACTION





***Paul Lakin* has never been very keen on gardening. Fortunate then that MicroProse's new game wasn't called *Privet Action*.**

Spying isn't what it was. In the good old days, a budding Bond knew where he stood. That agent has a funny accent, shoot him. That agent has a thin moustache, shoot him. That agent has large breasts, go to bed with him and then shoot him. Life was simple.

Now things are trickier. In *Covert Action* it's not a case of "Good evening Mr Bond, the Russians have stolen a missile plan and we want you to get it back." It's more a case of "Good evening Mr Remington, go and find out who's doing what and make them stop."



Having been highly trained, Max 'Close shave' Remington is fully conversant with the three B's of espionage: Bugging, Burglary and Bugg... *(I think we'll stick to two B's. Ed.)* After being given a couple of not terribly helpful clues by his boss and chatting over ideas with his intelligent but desk-bound assistant, he races to suspect house number one. Here he's faced with a number of options. There's the very cautious approach (watch the house and trail anyone who leaves), the not-so-cautious approach (try to bug the phones without triggering the alarms) and the out-and-out foolhardy approach (break in and search the building.)

Each of these offers a different sort of challenge. Bugging the phones is a taxing puzzle. In a race against time you have to reorganise a wiring diagram so that the current is directed away from the phones without being redirected to the alarms. Trailing a suspect is a matter of manoeuvring two cars through the streets so that you never lose sight of your quarry. A break-in is a tense, cat and mouse game as you dodge guards and attempt to crack safes and log onto computers. If you're discovered then all hell breaks out as you attempt to shoot your way out.

Any messages or files you get will probably need decoding. If that's an 'E', then that's an 'H'... um, that would make this one... 'htxre'. Back to the drawing board. You'll have to raid many houses in many cities before you've worked out what's going on. Then all you've got to do is stop it.

PC

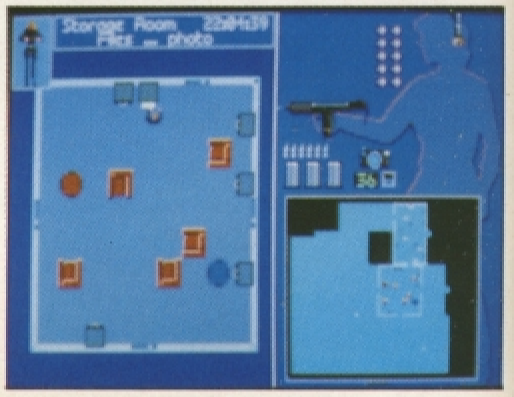
Paul: Well, here's a pleasant surprise, a spying game that's actually about spying rather than shooting and driving. Black ties and Berettas take back seat. It's your brain which gets shaken *and* stirred, not your martini.

Slick and imaginative, *Covert Action* is a very well put together game. The emphasis is on puzzles which are challenging without being fiddly or irritating. As well as tackling small scale problems like code-breaking and phone tapping, each mission is a huge problem. What's going on? And where? The computer helps you out by collating all the evidence, but it's up to you to decide what's important and worth acting on (though you can chat things over with your assistant if you want any hints or tips).

Hassle Factor: 0
This is a hassle free zone.

However, puzzles aren't all there is to it. One of the highlights of the game is the house breaking, either to gain info or take prisoners. Shandy drinkers will be pleased to know that as well as being able to use Uzis, stun grenades and smoke grenades to get out of trouble, Remington is not averse to cowering behind large pieces of furniture when danger threatens.

The scope of each assignment adds to the game's challenge. It's not a simple matter of win or lose. There are different levels of success. You might successfully foil the enemies' plans but only manage to catch the small fry. If you're lucky you might catch the mastermind. (And if your name's Lakin you might spend your time flying aimlessly from city to city without ever fathoming what's going on.)



Bet Anthony Blunt never had a catsuit.

Without featuring anything special on the technical side, *Covert Action* is challenging, addictive and often an exciting race against time. All in all it's rather like being caught up in the middle of a spy/detective novel, except you have to solve the problems yourself, not just wait 'til the last page and then say "Ha, I guessed that all along."

STOP

GRAPHICS 82	ADDICTIVENESS 85		OVERALL 83
SOUND 75	EXECUTION 86		


SALES CURVE
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" I haven't seen a decent shoot-em-up for ages (in fact Silkworm was probably the last). Now this looks set to end with a product from the very same Silkworm programmers that could challenge the mighty R-Type itself!"
(Zero Sep. 1990)
THE SALES CURVE
50 LOMBARD ROAD
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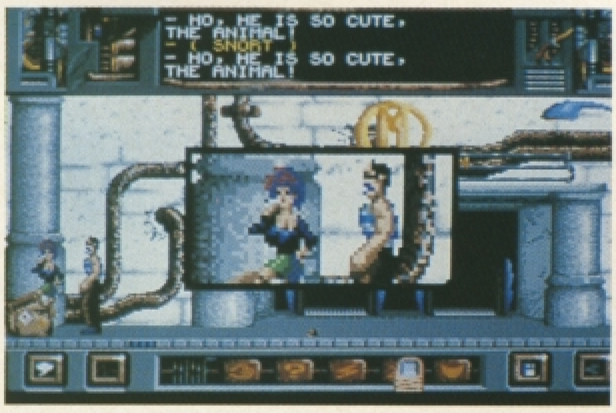
review

RANX

RanXerox the game is here. Is it a simulation of a range of photocopying equipment? Is it an arcade gong 'em up with Arthur J. Rank hitting a large gong? Is it a licence of a trifle bizarre French comic character? *David Wilson* opts for the latter and boots up Ubisoft's latest.



RanXerox is a character from Italian comic artists Tamburini and Liberatore. He's a massive muscular android, who sports blue lipstick, swimming goggles, and has a girlfriend called Lubna who seems to be aged a rather dubious twelve(!?). To my knowledge he's only had two comic adventures and both seem to have involved copious amounts of disturbing gratuitous violence and prepubescent nudity(!). In short the ideal material for a computer game. Erm... well, okay Ranx has been somewhat tamed down for computer consumption but only in the way that bare knuckle boxing is a scaled down version of street fighting i.e. it's still massively violent.



Ranx has a 'winning way' with the ladies.



Breaking open parking meters within earshot of cops can be hazardous to your health!

Ranx's nightmare future world is in a right two and eight – the Pope has been the victim of an African kamikaze whore(!), the US president, we're told, is in a worse position, and several squillion of the world's population have fallen prey to the 'psycho-plague' from space! You, as Ranx, have to take an antidote pill to the President and rescue your girl-friend Lubna, oh... and I'm not sure if it's made explicit in the instructions but you'll also have to figure out how to defuse a bomb that's been planted in your head!! In the meantime you get to travel between New York and Rome smashing parking meters for cash, beating up the populace, picking up spare parts and recharging yourself from lamposts(!)



We're advised that the best way to play *Ranx* is to be a rather unpleasant person: "be immoral to the maximum," cries the instruction manual, and "don't hesitate to use illicit methods". Blimey! It also says that "paying under the table is often welcome."(!) "Paying under the table? That's different sir!" (Unless you're paying by cheque which proves a bit tricky.) My sort of game then. Be careful though – don't kill people until you're sure they're of no use to you!

WHAT'S WHAT

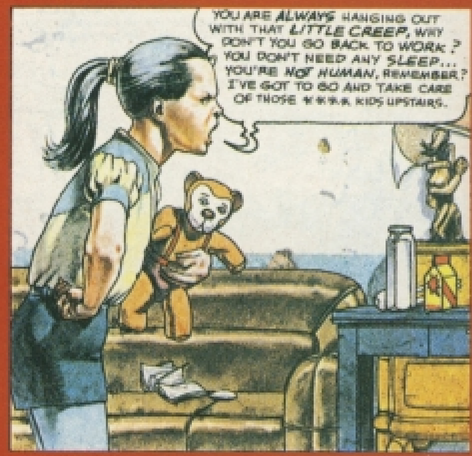
TITLE	Ranx
PUBLISHER	Ubisoft
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga/PC
RELEASED	November

THE

**The game has triedap
the comic. So here are a pr**

LUBNA

A sort of dodgy Lolita figure, Lubna is Ranx's girlfriend. She has the lovable seven foot android firmly under her thumb. Rescuing her from her tyrannical father is your final objective.



DOOR ACCESS MACHINES

You'll find several of these hi-tech entry devices on buildings in the city. Some you'll need to find access cards for, while others can be dealt with in a cruder fashion!



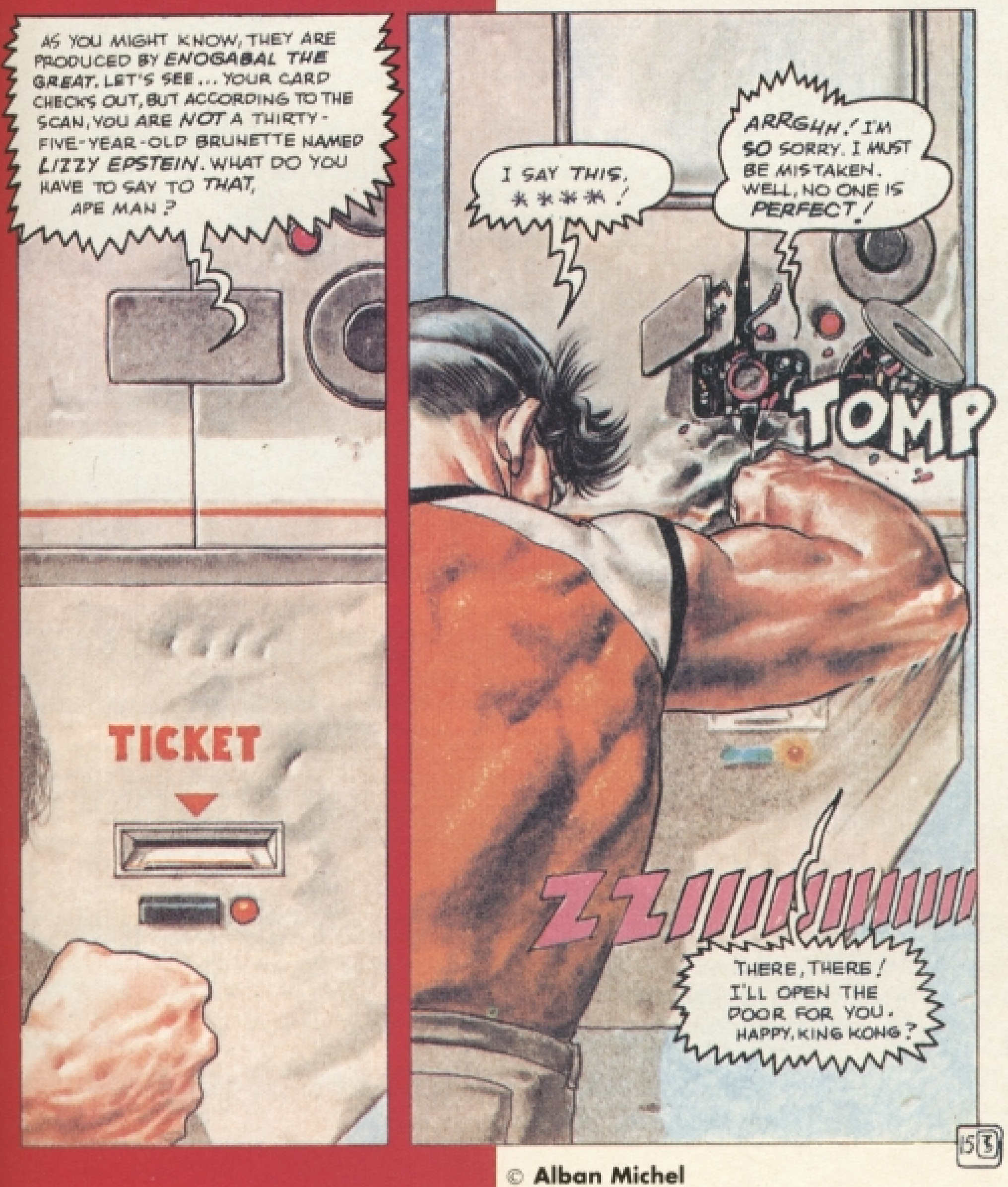
E CAST

ried to capture the flavour of e a fe printable comic panels (!)

RANX

The 'hero' of the piece, if that's the correct word. He's a very large android, and he's 'well 'ard'. Tweak his nipple and he's got his very own built in radio – but you'd better ask him politely first! His warcry is 'Znort' and his hobbies include flower-pressing, philately, embroidery and tearing off peoples' heads (but not necessarily in that order).

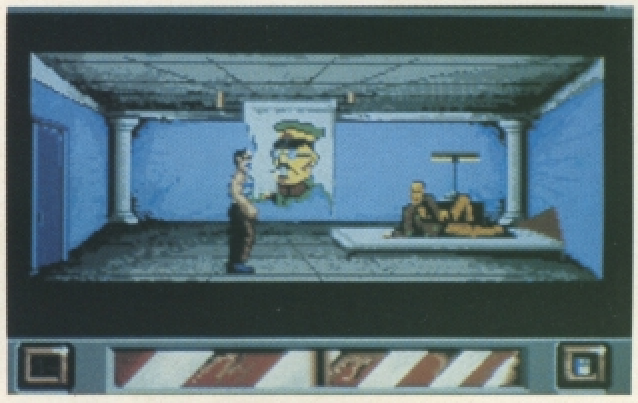




© Alban Michel

David: From the moment Ranx appears coming up the escalator from the tube station and a dog 'performs' on the pavement in front of him, you realise two things – firstly, this is a French game (ie rather weird) and secondly, the inclusion of a 'jobbie' sprite is an indication that perhaps this game is aimed at an older player! Let's get this straight from the start, the Ranx of the comics is aimed at a 'mature' reader and similarly the computer game is an 'adult' comic arcade adventure. Having said this, you shouldn't be too surprised to find that *Ranx* has loads of blood, a smattering of bad language and er... jobbies. In fact, the ad line "Your mother wouldn't like it!" is probably the understatement of the year!

Sound is used effectively – cries, car engine noises, dogs barking in the background, as well as noises from your actions, guns, metro trains, and the amusing sounds Ranx makes when talking to people. Graphics are very attractive, although the main sprite doesn't always move realistically and screens flip instead of scrolling, but the way you can interact with much of the scenery is a novelty – kicking and moving parked cars for example.



This wily rogue holds the key to your heart... or rather, the access card to your sweetheart!

Where *Ranx* does have a problem is the control system (also a feature of *Sir Fred*) – you've got a huge range of actions open to you via joystick moves, joystick moves with the fire button pressed, keyboard controls – and some of these, like throwing things, take a bit of mastering. Oh, and I'm convinced that there's one other problem and that's the game size. Although it's hard, by using the Save Game option I've already completed the first objective. (You get to travel to various colourful if rather seedy locations – check out the gang of whip weilding 'happy' people in leather leotards!)

HASSLE FACTOR: 2
Two disks, but little swopping. Accessing breaks between games and when you enter rooms, buildings and the tube.

Anyway, having established that *Ranx* is very seedy and gory, and having decided that you don't posess a 'nervous disposition', that you're over the age of consent and that your surname isn't Whitehouse, then you'll find *Ranx* an enjoyable adult romp through the world of a rather perverse comic character. Different, controversial, colourful and very unusual, *RanXerox* is bound to cause a stir and (trepidation about the corruption of the youf's morals aside) I rather liked it. Znort!



THE VERDICT

G	GRAPHICS	86
S	SOUND	86
A	ADDICTIVENESS	87
E	EXECUTION	87

• 20 • 40 • 60 • 80 • 100

An enjoyable adaptation of a highly dubious comic. Only hampered by the game size and (hem hem) the morality.

87

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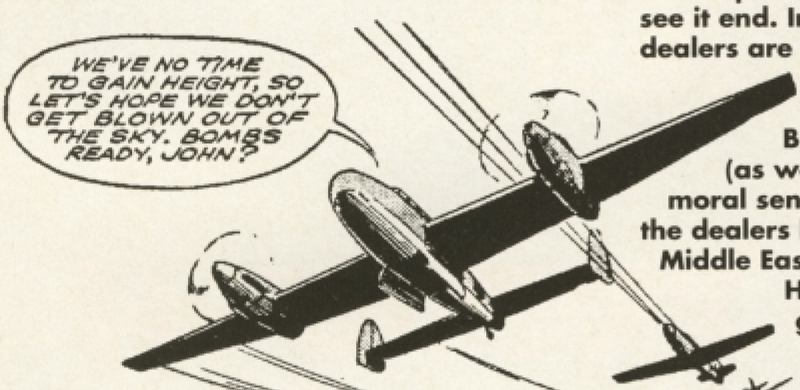
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U.N. SQUADRON

"It's a game about the Gulf," we told *Paul Lakin*. "Oh good," he replied, "I'll just go and pack my trusty 6-iron." Deaf git.



War, what is it good for? Absolutely nothin'." Unless you're an arms dealer of course. Or a General. Or a politician in search of votes. War, what is it good for? Making some people very rich, actually.

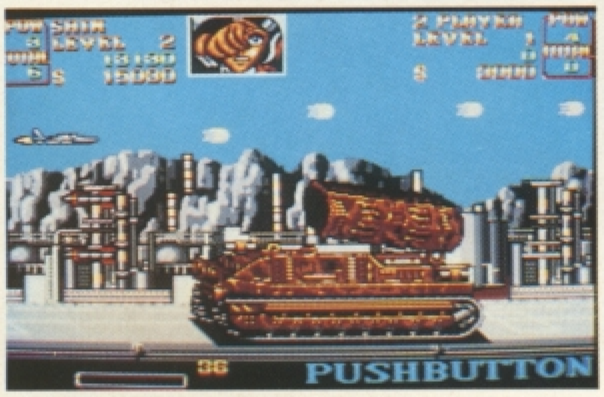
People who like war don't like to see it end. In *UN Squadron* the arms dealers are making an absolute killing (ahem) in a civil war racked Middle East. Being astute economists (as well as possessing the moral sensibility of a dead cod) the dealers have infiltrated all the Middle Eastern governments. Having loaded up these governments with glowing promises of power (and some pretty impressive weaponry to boot) the dealers retire to a Swiss Bank Account and prepare to sit back and watch the fun.

Are we in the Free World going to stand for this? Of course not. We believe in peace, freedom and the right of national self-determination. (Well perhaps not, but we do believe that our expensive motor cars won't run without petrol which amounts to the same thing really.) Time to send in UN Squadron.



UN Squadron is a multi-national force with up to the minute aircraft but distinctly mid-eighties hairdos. Choose between an American, a Japanese or a Dane (with the very Danish name of Greg Gates) flying, respectively, an F-14 Tomcat, an F-20 and an A-10. Once you've made your choice it's time to pop down to the local store. They've run out of Chocolate Hob Nobs. Oh well, might as well get a weapons upgrade while you're there.

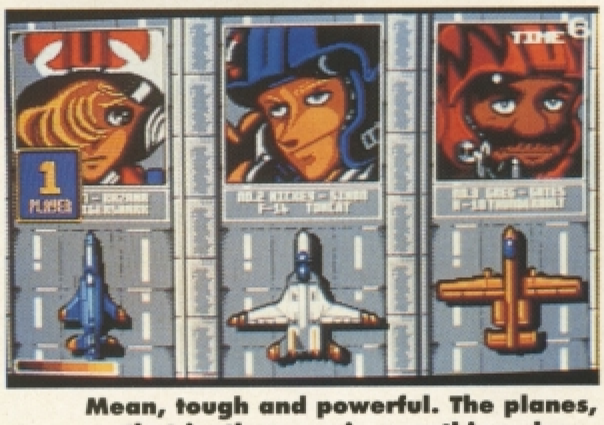
To satisfy your cravings for newer and bigger weapons you can gain extra money by destroying all and sundry in your way. Then at the end of the level it's back to the shop and spend spend spend.



A target that size and I still can't hit it.



Ooh, what lovely buildings. Let's trash 'em.



Mean, tough and powerful. The planes, that is; the crew is something else...

Paul: I didn't see *UN Squadron* in the arcades since, when it came out, I was busy designing a flag for the newly independent state of Stockton On Tees. However my more idle colleagues assure me that the 16-bit version is pretty faithful to the original. Whether the game was worth converting is another matter. It's a smooth, fast horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with plenty of action but little to distinguish it from a lot of other games of its ilk.

The characters look like the Japanese cartoons seen in some consoles and arcade games. (And in the rather dodgy pages of a certain French computer games mag.) These rather uninspiring faces flinch as their aircraft is hit: a nice touch but getting a bit old hat.

Once the action starts it's shooting all the way. By holding the fire button down continuously you fire your normal weapon, tapping the fire button unleashes one of your limited supply of special weapons. These weapons are best saved for the end of level nasty but inevitably you fire off most of them accidentally during the level.

Each level is detailed and colourful with no shortage of opponents. The screen is full of the blighters moving at great speed and attacking you from every which way at once. In fact, in two player mode with both of you firing your special weapons, the screen is so chaotic that it's impossible to tell what's going on.

Hassle Factor: 0
Nothing serious

If you're really into arcady shoot 'em ups then you'll probably get on okay with *UN Squadron*. More casual fans are less likely to be impressed. This is a good conversion of a not terribly special game.

STOP

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	UN Squadron
PUBLISHER	US Gold/Capcom
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

GRAPHICS 82	ADDICTIVENESS 75	SOUND 75	EXECUTION 79	OVERALL 77


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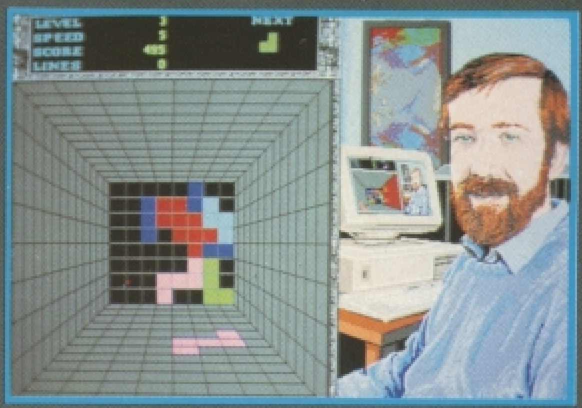
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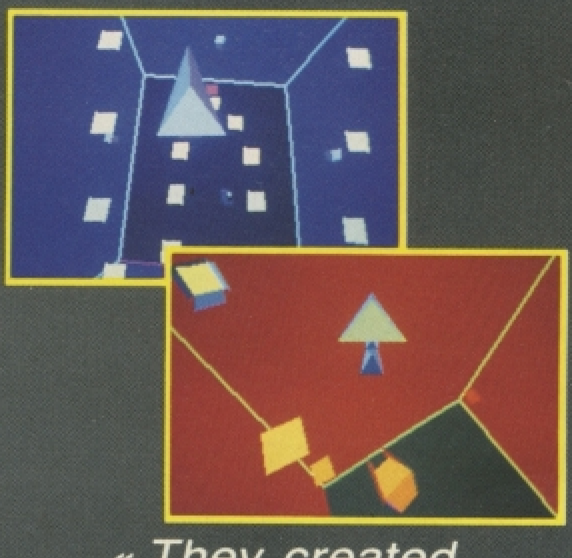
Welltris



« Master the colours, rule space... »

ATARI ST-STE, AMIGA, PC & compatibles, Spectrum, C64, Macintosh

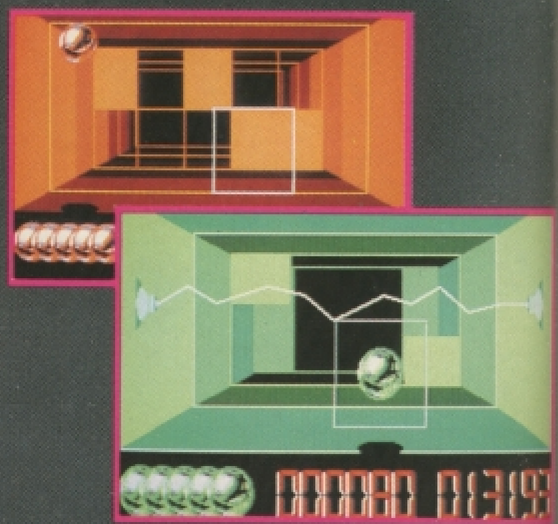
Alpha Waves



« They created the dream machine... »

ATARI ST-STE, AMIGA, PC & compatibles

The light corridor



« The echo of lights on the walls of silence... »

ATARI ST-STE, AMIGA, PC & compatibles

ATOMIC ROBOKID

Just to prove that at ZERO we get *all* the stars working for us, here's *Nick Ross* with one of the latest hot coin-op conversions from Activision. Take it away Nicky boy...



Nick Ross: Hello, I'm Nick Ross, and welcome to this month's edition of *Crimewatch*. *(No, no, that's not what we're paying you for. Ed.)* Later on we'll be showing you a reconstruction in which a really crap old actress in a nightie will leap out of bed and feebly call out "Who is it? Is someone there?" before being trussed to a chair by three blokes in balaclavas. But first this:

The police need help in tracing a gang of armed robbers who broke into the offices of a computer games firm and made off with the scenario for their latest arcade conversion, *Atomic Robokid*. I'm joined now by P.C. Spamhead of the Chudley Under Bucket Incident room. Have you got a description for the viewers?"

"Well Nick, it's a pretty standard parallax-scrolling shoot 'em up, with all the usual fare, y'know: make your way through progressively more difficult levels peppered with obstacles and booby-traps and creatures coming at you from all directions, blast everything in sight, collect power-ups and weapons, overcome a big baddie boss at the end of every third level – you get the picture."

"Erm. I meant a description of the robbers, actually. Never mind. *(Turns back to camera frowning.)* If you think *you* can help us with our enquiries, call us now. We'll be back for an update soon. *(Don't bother. Ed.)* Don't have nightmares! Good night!"



WHAT'S WHAT

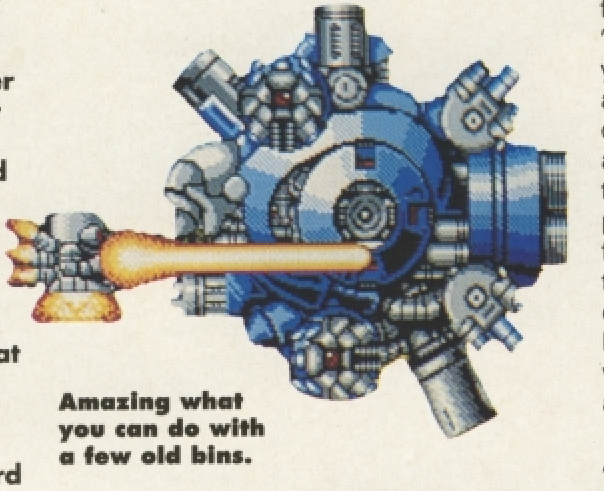
TITLE	Atomic Robokid
PUBLISHER	Activision
PRICE	£24.99
FORMAT	ST/Amiga
RELEASED	Out now

AMIGA

Jane: You are *Atomic Robokid* and as shoot 'em up heroes go, you're a cute little fella, if a bit odd looking. You start the game with a feeble single-bullet gun, but the numerous power-ups will soon have you furnished with all manner of shooty things, designed to be just the ticket for some terrains and enemies, but utterly crap for others. This adds to the challenge of mastering the game.

In terms of action, gameplay and variety (in power-ups, obstacles and foes) *Atomic Robokid* stands up pretty well next to the shoot 'em up classics (*R-Type*, *Xenon II* et al). The biggest difference, however, is that scrolling occurs when you move Robokid, rather than speeding along regardless of your movements. This makes the pace slightly less frantic, and it also means you can scarper from big baddies to compose yourself (though you'll still have to tackle the nasties coming at you from behind). This extra time allows you to bring an element of strategy into your gameplay, rather than relying on the speed of your instincts and thumb (or autofire facility!), though for diehard *R-Typers*, this could send the game dangerously close to shandy-drinkers' territory.

HASSLE FACTOR 0:
Smooth as a baby's bottom

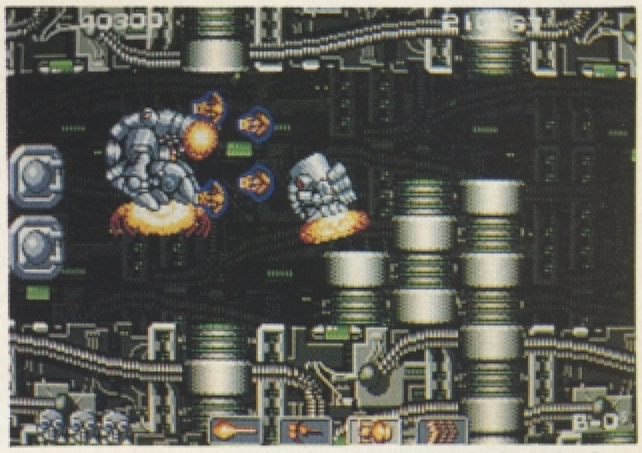


Amazing what you can do with a few old bins.

The background ditty and sound effects are distinctly underwhelming, but the graphics are cookin', with a cute style that sets *Atomic Robokid* apart visually from other blasters and makes a nice change. The continue option (which you get three chances to use) gets full marks.

Robokid is good, straightforward, value-for-money stuff: just about challenging and complex enough for the shoot 'em up expert but sufficiently simple and addictive to hook the novice too.

GRAPHICS	83	ADDICTIVENESS	84	OVERALL 85
SOUND	73	EXECUTION	88	



No poncy songs for this Robokid On The Block.

ST

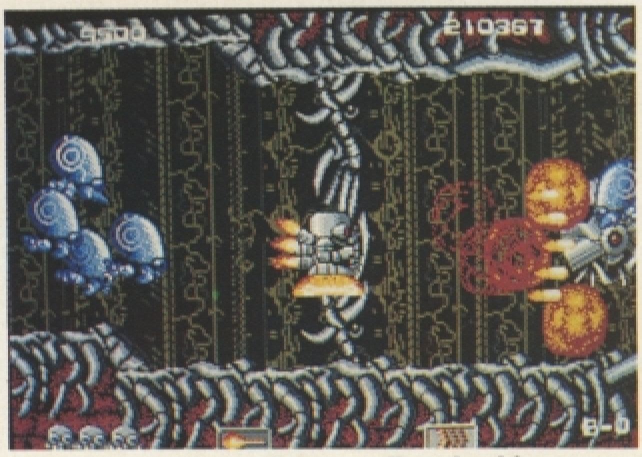
Mike: *(Oh no, not another 'special guest reviewer'. Ed.)* Actually I'm here on Work Experience. *(That's what Nick Ross said. Ed.)* Have you ever felt sorry for those people who won dustbins on *3-2-1*? (No, same 'ere). Have you ever fallen in love with Dusty Bin? (No, same 'ere). *Atomic Robokid* is a game which you'll love or loathe depending on your answers to the above questions. You control a flying dustbin with a trunk (weird!) and plough through 21 levels of shoot 'em up frenzy. And it ain't a half bad game despite the fact it all seems to be the product of a deranged dustbin salesman's nightmares. It has rad music (which will have you pounding your feet to the beat) *(Sez who? Ed.)* as well as nicely defined graphics.

HASSLE FACTOR: 1
Waiting between levels

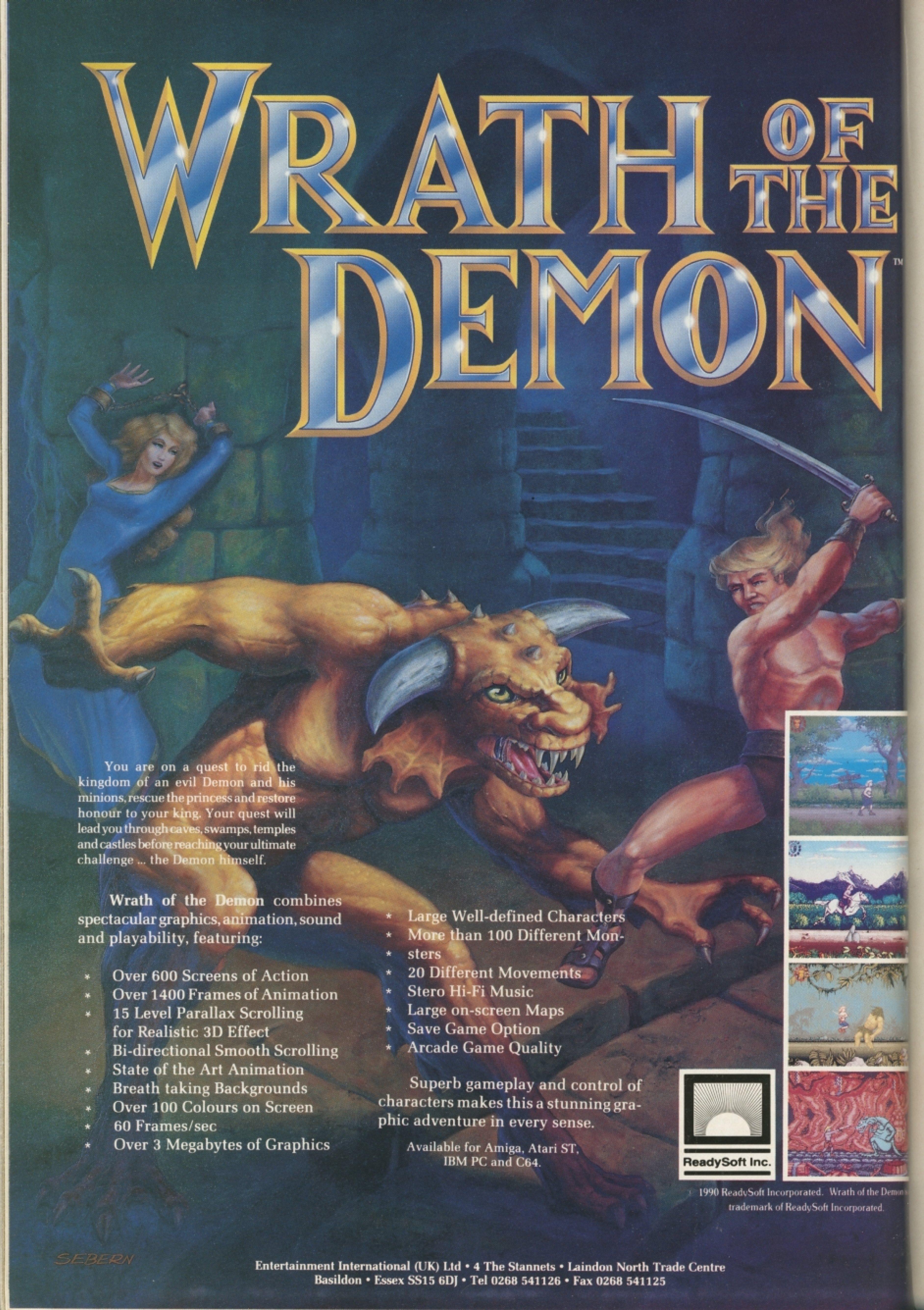
ST owners have it harder than their Amiga counterparts: there's one fewer life on each credit than the other version and the guardians are more difficult to dispose of. The graphics are the same as on the Amiga (hurrah!), but the old sound chip story is still relevant here (arghh!). Overall a pretty good game which just falls short of ZERO HERO award due to a lack of longterm enjoyment.

STOP

GRAPHICS	80	ADDICTIVENESS	78	OVERALL 82
SOUND	79	EXECUTION	81	



He's cute, trashy and into mollusc bashing.


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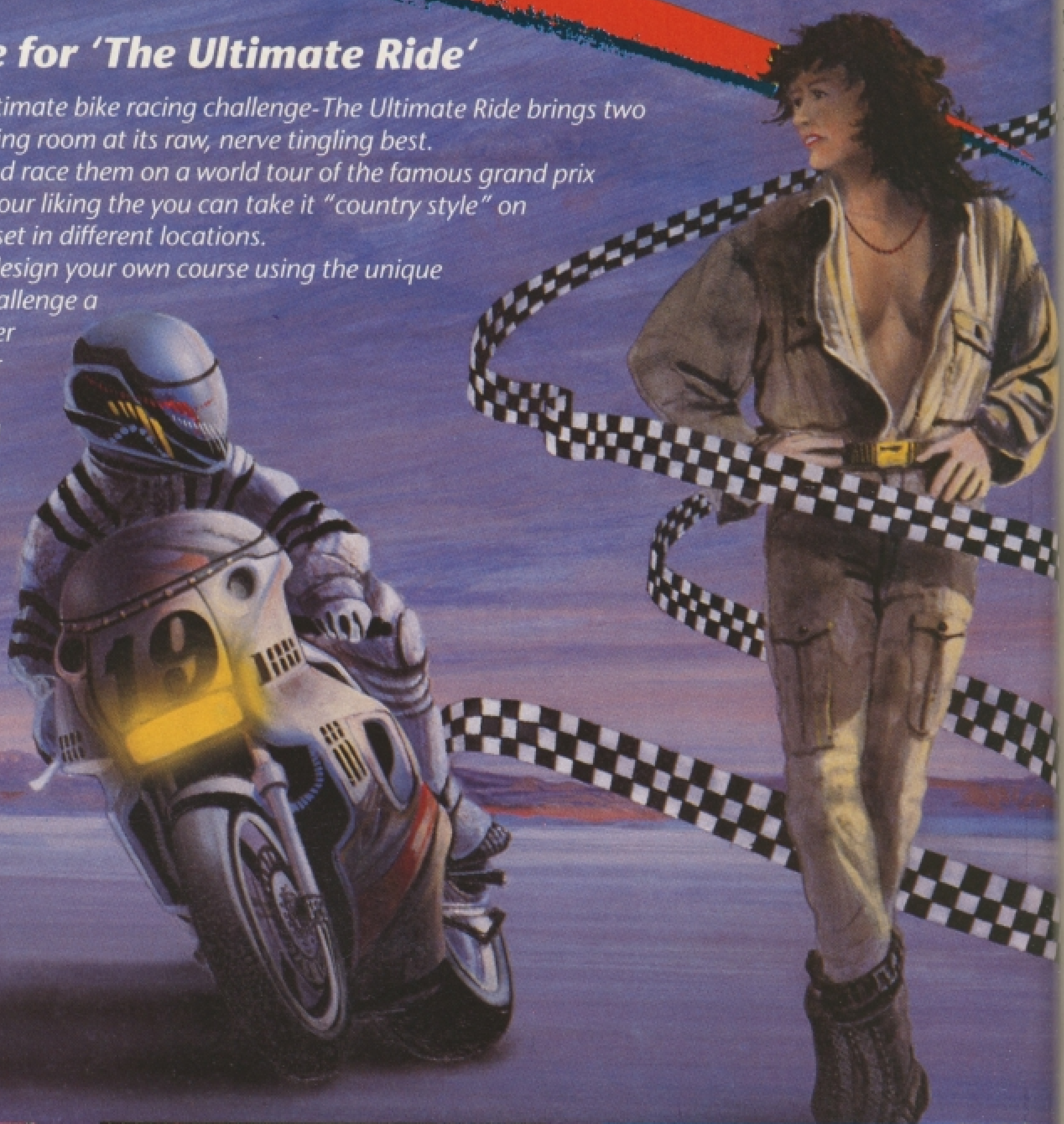
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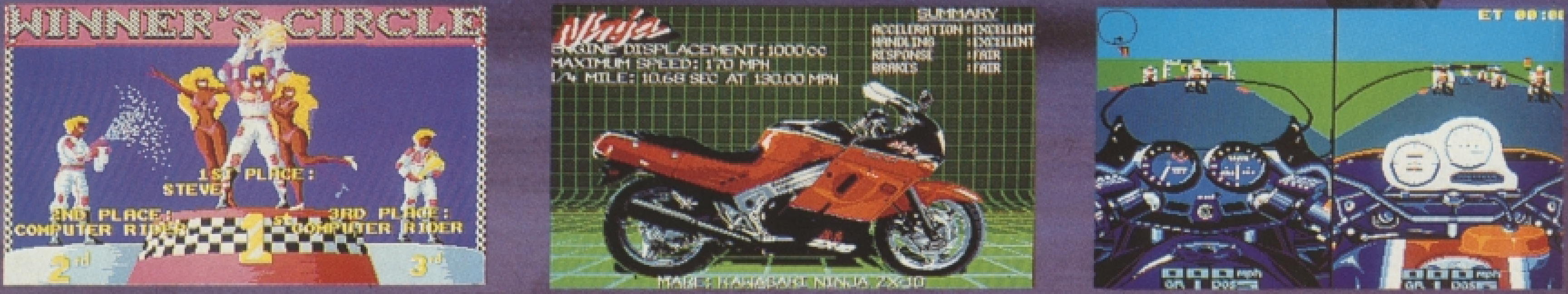
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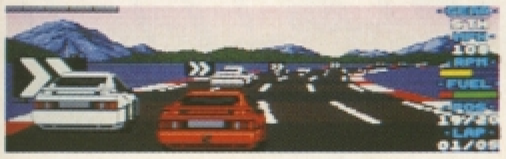
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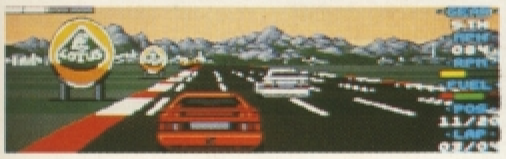
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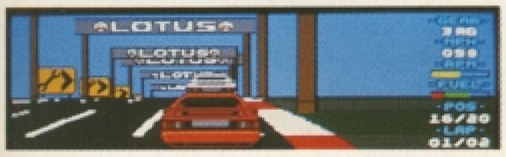


This month those kind people from Gremlin and Lotus (er... if you've got any Esprits going spare lads...) are offering you the trip of a lifetime. Gremlin are rather chuffed by their new driving game *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge* which involves driving a Lotus through 32 different courses. They're so impressed by its realism that they're offering you the chance to compare it to the real thing.



GO GO GO

For the over 18's they're offering a full day out at Brand's Hatch including 45 mins of training and then 5 laps in a sports car (coo). You'll also get the chance to go in a Formula Ford including an oppor-tunity to do 12 timed laps. Under 18's will get an outing on a go-cart course including 40 laps of go-cart racing. And 10 runners-up will receive copies of the Gremlin game. Those are the prizes, now on with the competition. Simply answer the two easy peasey questions and the little more tricky tie-breaker below. Then send your entry to **I Know How To Get My Lotus Into Position, ZERO Compos, Dennis Publishing Ltd., PO Box 1EA, London W1A 1EA.**



RULES

- The Editor's decisions is final, no appealing to his bon esprit.
- Entries recieved after the 31st December 1990 will be used as New Year decorations.
- Members of Dennis Publishing, Lotus or Gremlin caught entering are going turbo disappointed.



LOTUS POCUS COMPO

1 **How much does a Lotus Esprit Turbo cost?**____________

2 **What was Gremlin's last car game called?**____________

3 **Write a limerick in less than 60 words which includes the words Lotus and Gremlin.**

____

____

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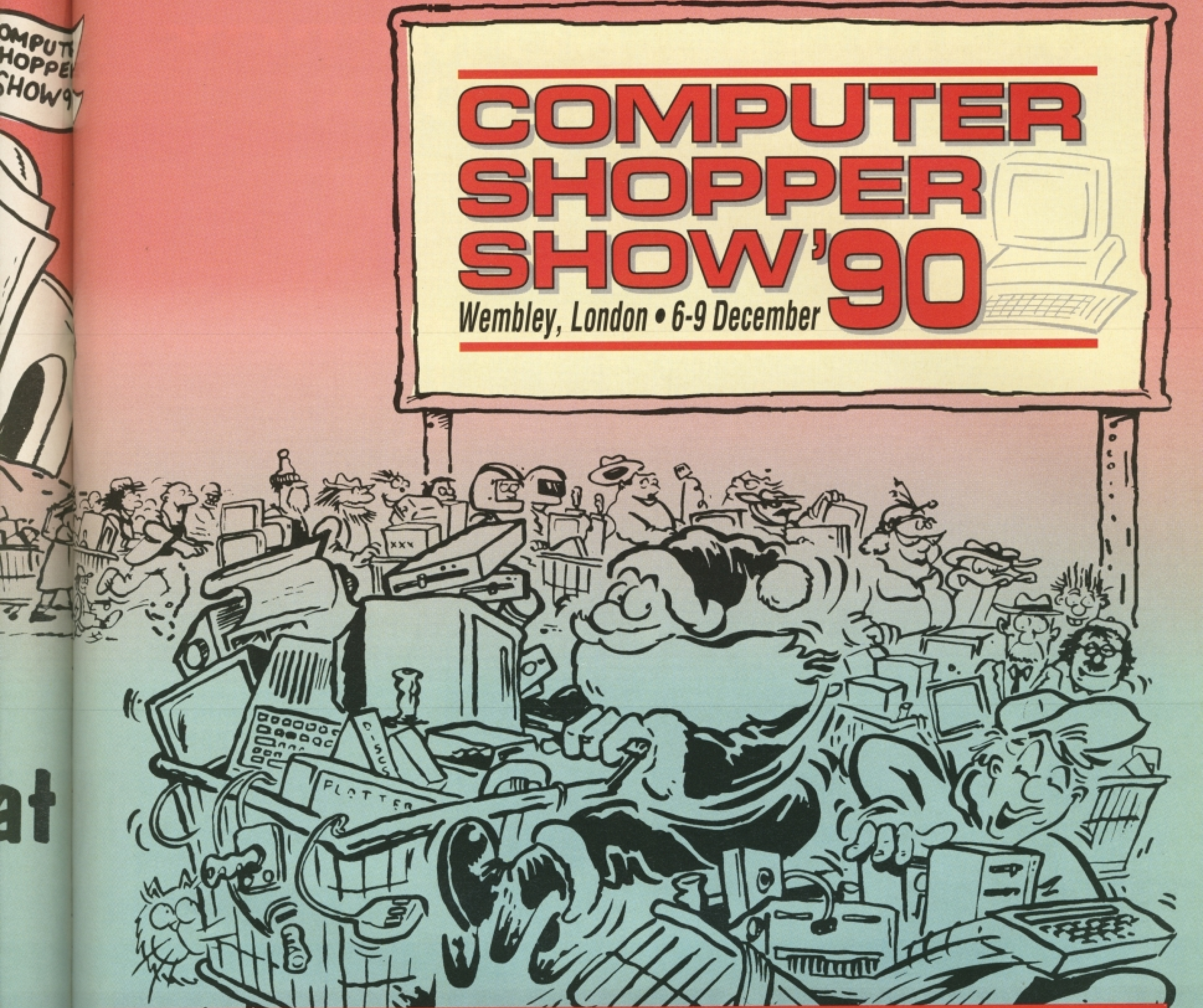
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DOSH EATERS

One Taito, two Taito, three Taito four. As you may have already guessed the Electrocoin arcade is currently chock full of new titles from Taito. *David Wilson* went with his pockets bulging with 50 pees to check them out.

MAJESTIC TWELVE

Taito/50p a go

Make no bones about it, this *Majestic Twelve* is one WEIRD game! It's also rather indicative of the lack of originality in the arcades at the mo – basically because it's a rehash of that old stalwart *Space Invaders*! I was a tad dubious, but then I played the Cattle Mutation level! On this stage, your base sits at the bottom of the screen positioned over a field. Grazing in said field are about ten cows – your mission, to protect them! Formations of accurate 50's B-movie flying saucers then start whizzing about. Watch those cows – every now and then one will start shimmying! This is because it's been caught in a saucer's tractor beam. Saucers pick up cows 'Defender' like and take them to the top of the screen. Shoot the the saucer and the cow will politely say thank you. (What are these guys on!?)



Anyway the other levels are also variations on the original theme with state of the art graphics and novel twists. The beauty of *Majestic Twelve* is that although the pace may be a bit slower than most modern arcade games, this sort of guarantees longer games and subsequently better vfm (that's value for money, fact fans).



Let's let the coin-op's soundtrack speak for itself. *Badoom badoom...*



...thump-thump thumpa thump-thumpa BADOOM BADOOM (skree skree)...



***...badoom badoom BADOOM! Moo?!* Blimey.**

THE SCORE

No in-depth scoring analysis for the Doshies Scoring System, fans. Oh no, instead it's simplicity personified. All games, rather appropriately, are marked out of five Space Invaders, and this mark isn't a specific response to graphics or technical accomplishment but rather our general opinion. Call it a gut reaction, call it maternal instinct, call it what you will, but one thing's for certain – a full five invaders makes for a cracking coin-op to be missed at your peril, whilst one invader spells Dross City.

MAGIC SWORD
Capcom/50p a go



Right, heads you fight the dragon... Oh dear.

The only game in this month's pages that doesn't hail from the Taito stable this month, is Capcom's *Magic Sword*. Not unlike their *Dark Seal* which we looked at last month – except for the viewpoint – it's a sword and sorcery beat 'em up magic 'em up with wizards, warriors, elves and dragons.

Magic Sword is a viewed- from-the-side horizontal scroller with two player simultaneous action. Everything is set in a huge towering castle where each floor is a level of the game. There are loads of chests to be opened for weapons and treasure, and beasties to be killed. Your objective on each level is to find keys and then use them to free captives held in the cells. These include aforementioned warriors, warrioresses, wizards etcetera and these guys will then accompany you as you progress firing their weaponry when you do and thus proving themselves rather 'handy' in your quest.

Despite being startlingly unoriginal I found *Magic Sword* very playable and the usual continue option kept me feeding it silver to progress that little bit further.

AIR INFERNO
Taito/50p a go



Despite causing a stir at the Amusement Trades Show last year, it's finally here. Taito's *Air Inferno* is the *Hard Drivin'* of helicopter games – well, I liken it to *Hard Drivin'* because of the 'feel' of the chopper, the sit down cabinet, the rather nice vector graphics with fires, buildings, oil tankers and graduated sky, and the feature that replays your untimely demises.

For a refreshing change, the aim of the game apart from adequately piloting the chopper(!) is to fight fires. For this you're equipped with a forward firing water canon. You can opt to go straight into the thick of the action or you can opt to practice. For this you'll have to complete various stages from basic flying, through flying and fighting fires on the ground and in skyscrapers, each one in a time limit. Fail to beat the clock and it's game over. Unlike *Hard Drivin'* it's got a digitised voice to offer advice on piloting such as 'Gain Altitude', 'Increase Thrust', 'Go Forwards', 'Pull Up You Idiot!!' and it'll take a few goes to get good enough to get your money's worth.





Agh! A burning petrol tanker! I'm off!

OUT ZONE
Taito/50p a go

Remember *Mercs*, the spiffing Capcom blast 'em up we were raving about last month? Well, *Out Zone* is very similar except for one major thing – its futuristic setting. Well, except for two major things – its futuristic setting and the fact it's got two player simultaneous gameplay. Erm... and it's not as good... Anyway so apart from three major differences, *Out Zone* is rather similar to *Mercs*. It's also pretty good vertically-scrolling *Ikari Warriors*-style shoot 'em up action with the obligatory super weapon – a sort of hurricane of fireballs that shake the screen and fry all and sundry to a crisp. There's bonus pick ups, different weapon systems and big baddie sprites. Predictable but fun.

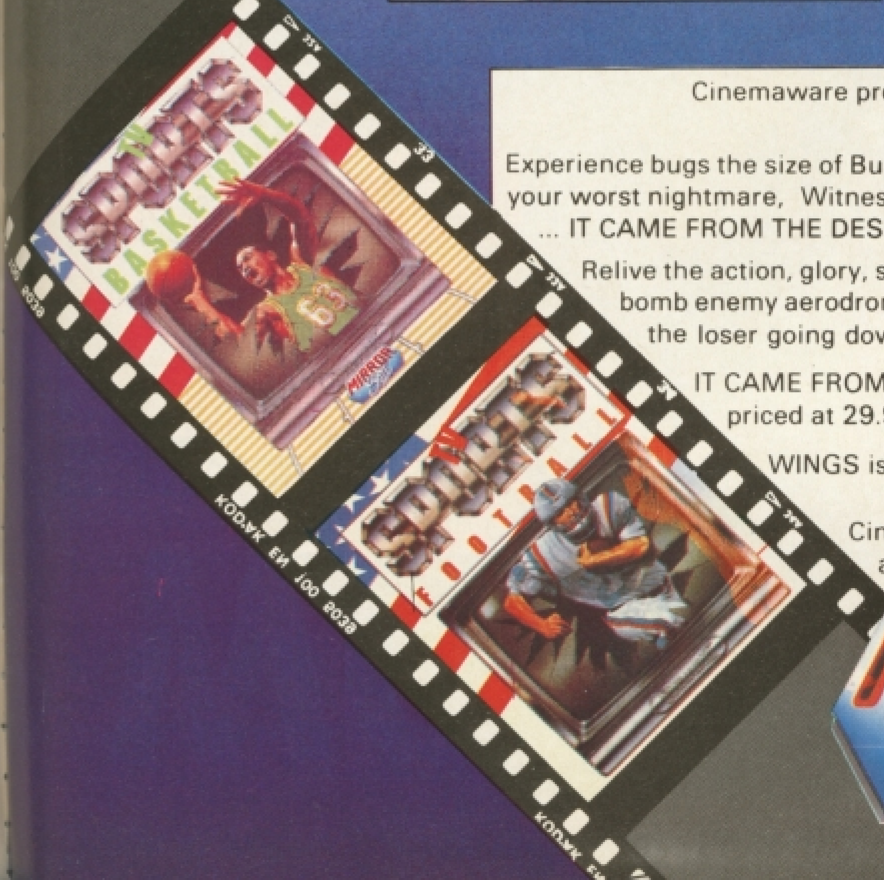


PALAMEDES
Taito/50p a go

Palamedes is a puzzle game that combines elements of both *Tetris* and *Plotting*. Up to two players take on the role of a cutesy chap at the bottom of the screen holding a six-sided dice. Above you are rows of dice which gradually descend as further rows are added. Each die shows one of its six faces and your objective is to stop their descent by shooting them with your dice rotated so that the same face is showing. Now from here you can achieve further success by hitting dice in a certain order – a 'straight' for example (1,2,3,4,5,6) will result in five rows disappearing, and 'six of a kind' kills four rows. You'll waste quite a few 50 pees before you get to grips with this, but if you persevere it's pretty addictive.







Cinemaware presents a special double bill for computer Users featuring IT CAME FROM THE DESERT and WINGS.

Experience bugs the size of Buicks. Feel the desert wind chap your parched lips. Be consumed by your worst nightmare, Witness science fiction become fact as the unimaginable becomes real in ... ... IT CAME FROM THE DESERT.

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IT CAME FROM THE DESERT is now playing for the Commodore Amiga (1 meg only) priced at 29.99. Coming shortly for IBM PC and compatibles and the Atari ST.

WINGS is a coming attraction for the Commodore Amiga also priced at 29.99.

Cinemaware's TV Sports Football and TV Sports Basketball are already available for the Commodore Amiga.

MIRROR Soft

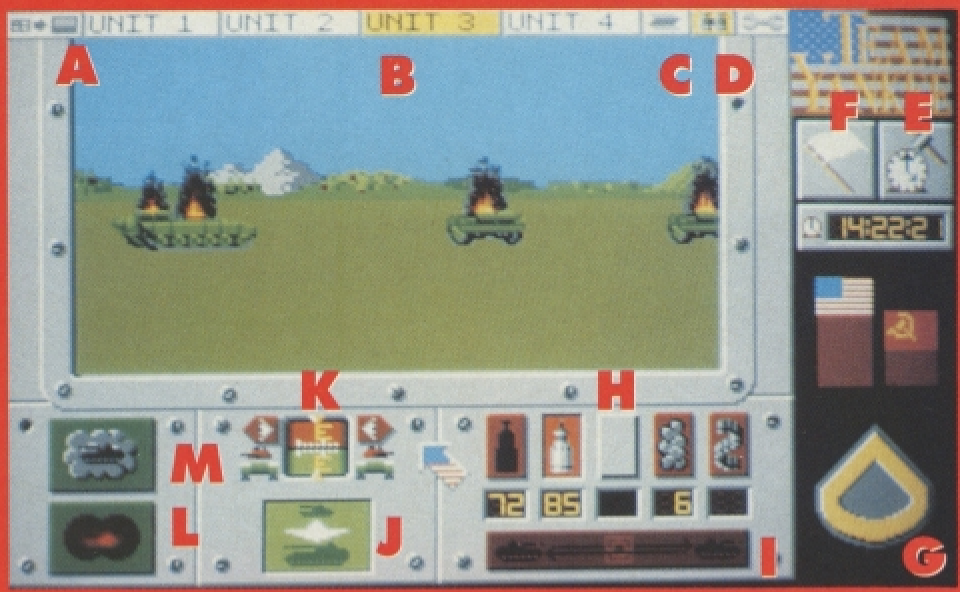
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TEAM YANKEE

There are two types of tanks: the ones with goldfish and plastic plants, and the ones with soldiers in and a sticky-out tube on the front. Empire brings us a simulation of (thankfully) the latter. It's *Team Yankee* and *Duncan MacDonald* has a butchers.



A: Click this to go to the 'four views in one' screen
B: These switch you between the different platoons
C: For the map
D: Cockpit view (i.e. this view)
E: Pause game
F: Surrender game
G: Your rank
H: Choose your weapon
I: Laser range finder for certain types of shell
J: Binoculars (or 'zoom' if you prefer)
K: Tank/turret heading
L: Infra-red image (for night battles)
M: Produces tank-concealing smoke

Tanks – they're rather predictable, aren't they? And tank sims are much the same – we all know what to expect from a new addition to the genre. So, guess how many tanks you control in *Team Yankee*? Yup, 16 of the little devils. However, *Team Yankee* differs in its implementation: most of the graphics are bitmapped and you can control all four platoons at once. One of the viewing modes cuts the screen into quarters, so that everything each platoon leader sees can be viewed simultaneously. In fact, everything you can do on the larger screen, you can do on the four quarter sized screens.

Let's move to the larger screen. First the map. Using the mouse it's point 'n' click time. Scroll the map, zoom in, zoom out, pick tank formations and drag icons around so your tanks know where you want them. The briefing screen tells you there are 24 enemy tanks moving from the top right of the map to a village at the bottom. You've got to stop them. To the map then – drag the 'move' icons and send platoons one and two to the left where they can hide in a forest ready for sniping, then send platoons three and four up and to the right for a fight on open ground (hem hem). Click into platoon three cockpit mode and you're... erm, in the lead tank of platoon three. Click into binocular mode; rotate the turret left and right. You see a splodge on the horizon, so select a weapon and move the aiming cursor over the target. Click and "Kaboom!" – off goes a shell. Unfortunately it only alerts the enemy to your presence. They're firing back and you get a text message saying that platoons three and four have been destroyed. Just as well numbers one and two are hidden in the forest, isn't it?

HASSLE FACTOR: 0
One disk, no waits.

WHAT'S WHAT

TITLE	Team Yankee
PUBLISHER	Empire
PRICE	£29.99/£34.99
FORMAT	ST & Amiga/PC
RELEASED	Out now

Dunc: Tank sims are notorious for their complexity and the fact that you need eight pairs of hands and two brains to get anywhere. Not so in *Team Yankee* – the authors have really thought out the control system and you can become fully proficient at moving and shooting within half an hour.
The animation of the graphics (which are mostly bitmapped) can be a bit jerky and at times quite confusing (trees seem to be going in one direction when they're actually going the opposite way). But the strategy's quite something else. Tank battles are like a game of hide and seek, and you can spend hours just trying to sneak up on the enemy without being detected.



"Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler?.." It's the *Dad's Army* intro sequence!

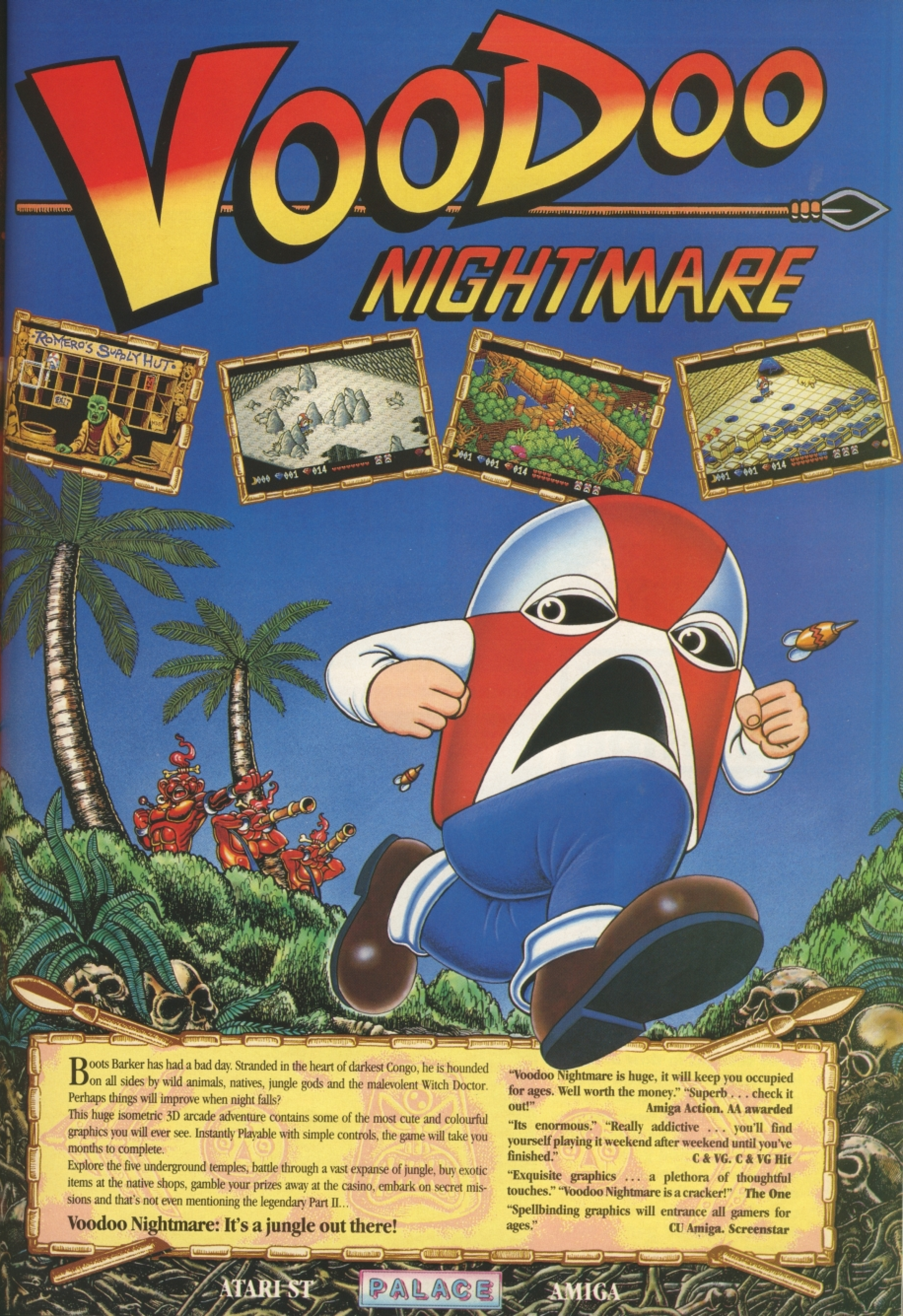
At the end of the day though, for me, *Team Yankee* just didn't quite 'grab hold' if you know what I mean – and it did really boil down to the animation. I know pseudo 3D bitmapped games are getting more convincing (*Resolution 101*, *Their Finest Hour* etc.) but in *Team Yankee* it just hasn't quite come off. Oh, and I forgot to mention the book. This game is a spin-off. You get *Team Yankee*, the *New York Times'* number one bestseller, included 'free' with the package. And when you consider that the boxed game and book weigh in at 30 quid plus you'll understand why the word 'free' is in inverted commas.



Crumbs, I'd better get my eyes tested – I'm seeing quadruple! Oh, hang on... it's the 'four views in one screen'. Thank goodness.

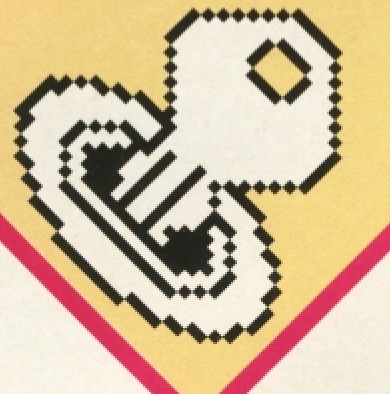
GRAPHICS 83 | ADDICTIVENESS 80 | SOUND 88 | EXECUTION 81 | OVERALL 81


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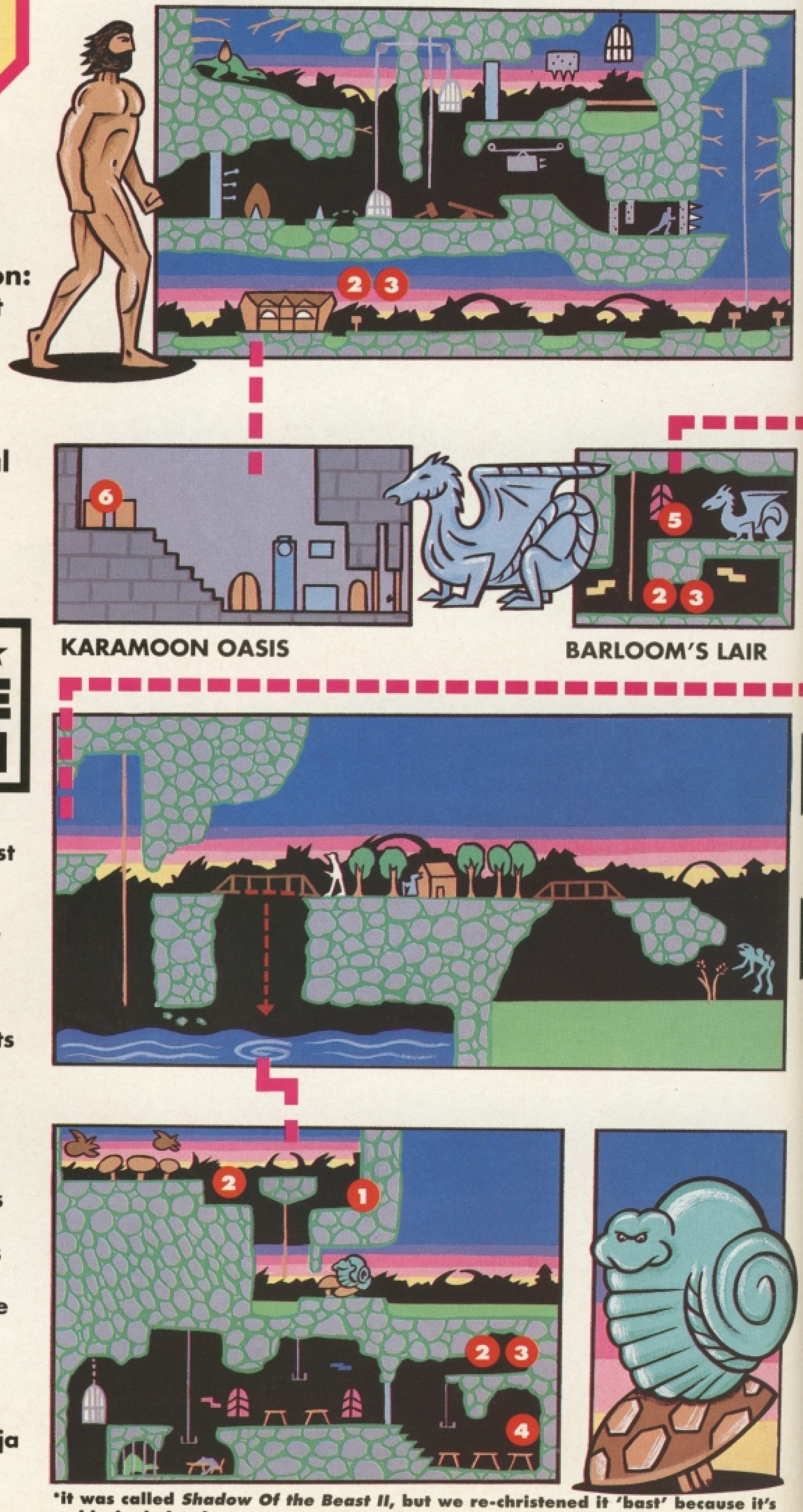

VOODOO
NIGHTMARE
ROMERO'S SUPPLY HUT
EXIT
Boots Barker has had a bad day. Stranded in the heart of darkest Congo, he is hounded on all sides by wild animals, natives, jungle gods and the malevolent Witch Doctor. Perhaps things will improve when night falls?
This huge isometric 3D arcade adventure contains some of the most cute and colourful graphics you will ever see. Instantly Playable with simple controls, the game will take you months to complete.
Explore the five underground temples, battle through a vast expanse of jungle, buy exotic items at the native shops, gamble your prizes away at the casino, embark on secret missions and that's not even mentioning the legendary Part II…
Voodoo Nightmare: It's a jungle out there!
"Voodoo Nightmare is huge, it will keep you occupied for ages. Well worth the money." "Superb . . . check it out!" Amiga Action. AA awarded
"Its enormous." "Really addictive . . . you'll find yourself playing it weekend after weekend until you've finished." C & VG. C & VG Hit
"Exquisite graphics … a plethora of thoughtful touches." "Voodoo Nightmare is a cracker!" The One
"Spellbinding graphics will entrance all gamers for ages." CU Amiga. Screenstar
ATARI ST
PALACE
AMIGA

CRYSTAL TIPS*

*AND ALISTAIR



SHADOW



Multiple choice question: Who has the biggest tips in the world? Possible answers: a) Samantha Fox; b) Berol; c) *David McCandless* in Crystal Tips (*Er, might that be 'a'? Ed.*)

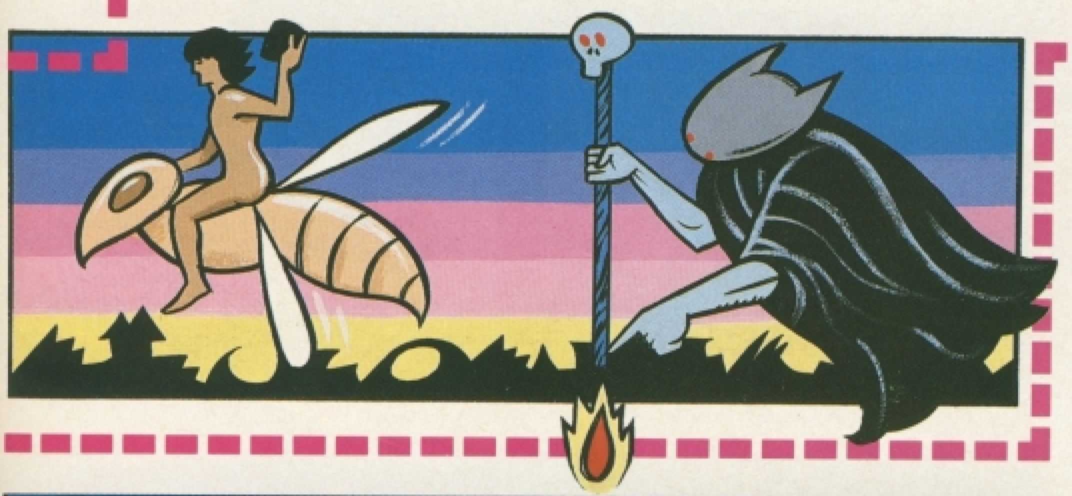
★★★ ZERO ★★★ COMPLETE SOLUTION

***S**hadow Of The Bast* is simply one of the most difficult games in the world. There are people in the world who can 'do' the *Krypton Factor* assault course with both arms and legs tied behind their back, then climb Everest and all its neighbouring peaks blindfolded, and then call Mike Tyson "a shandy-sipping nonce" to his face. These people wouldn't last three seconds in *Bast II*. It is impossible to complete this game without the cheat (it's on page 96) and even then it's still difficult. So using the cheat won't spoil your enjoyment of the game, although reading this complete solution, courtesy of red hot poker games ninja **James Clover** will...

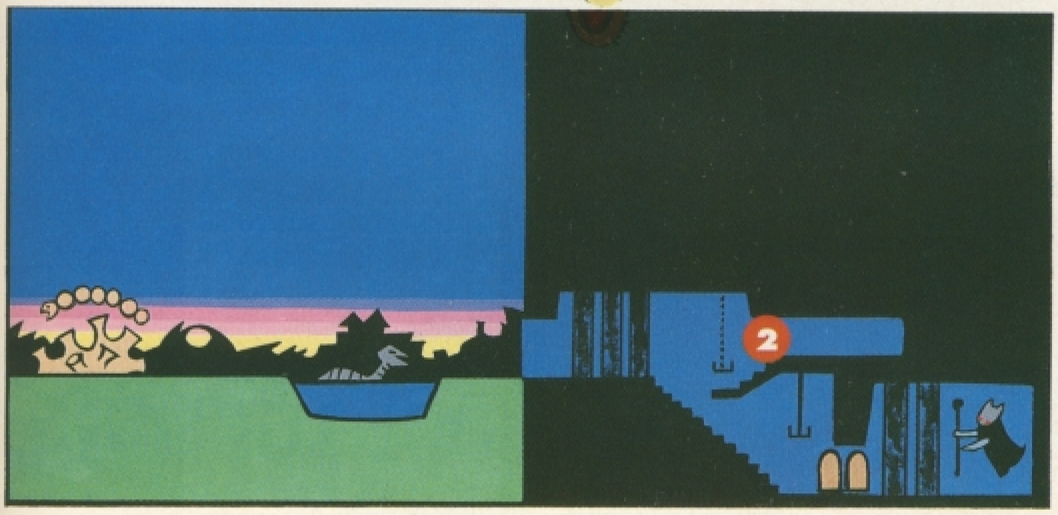
*It was called *Shadow Of the Beast II*, but we re-christened it 'bast' because it's so blaringly hard.

OF THE BAST II*





START



FINISH



BLOODY HARD

First of all go left until you reach a man being attacked by an airborn poll-tax collector. Nobble the bast with your mace and ask the man about 'TRAPS'. He says either upper or lower switch. Go down and left into the next passage via the rope. Proceed left and another poll-tax collector should pass overhead. Follow it back to the rope and kill it. Now go down and left to the Karamoon oasis, slaying everything you meet (remember to collect the money). When inside the oasis grab the flask of wine to the left. And you can exchange a few tasteless remarks with the barman for good measure.

FLIPPING DIFFICULT

When you return to the first corridor, a big man is blocking the passage with a boulder. Spill his guts to the four winds and carry on left.

Go up the steep hill, avoid the traps and kill the poll-taxer when it appears. Collect the key it throws down the slope. Climb the rope on the left and open the door with the key. Go to the switches and fire your mace at the one instructed by the bloke you rescued originally. Get into the lift and wait...

Once in the new location go all the way left, avoiding the pit by using the chain to swing over. Pick up the key on the end table. Climb the chain leading to the upper room and grab the money. Return to the pit, lower yourself tentatively as far down the chain as you can go without falling in, and jump left. If you wake the harpy you're done for. Open the door of the caged lion-monster-thing and let it scare the doodahs out of the taxman. Now hit the lower switch and return back to the main see-saw chamber.



Go away! I'm a single person of no fixed abode and I'm not liable for the community charge!

A BIT ARDUOUS

Go left to the wall with three switches and, using the crane, lift the rock over the acid pool and drop it on the spike below (top switch open/closes claw, middle moves it left and right, bottom switch raises and lowers it).



Now push the smaller rock, created by your manoeuvres, over the bridge onto the see-saw. Climb the adjacent rope and project yourself onto the other end of the see-saw. If you get the height right, the boulder should be catapulted into the cage above it. Now with strength ebbing from your powerful thighs, swiftly make your way to the other cage on the left. Thanks to gravity, Newton's Laws and all that tapioca, you end up in the cage which is rising to a new, previously unexplored location. Spread the guts of the dragon over the ground and rescue the peasant from the sack (by clubbing the sack with your mace). It's the old peasant-in-sack ploy from there on. You rescue him and he gives you the secret password.

NOT AT ALL EASY

Go to Barloom's lair, hit him with the password and proceed inside. Now climb the rope, take the scroll and then go down and right to collect the treasure. Then return all the way to the surface and go right. Keep going right, passing the grabbing trees and through the pygmies' forest. Now jump onto the block before the rope and go up and left until you're on the bridge. There is another bitch-hell-mutha here so using cunning and agility (and cheat mode) slay it. It drops an axe (vital hardware) so collect it. Climb the rope and retrieve the gold here. Now go back to the bridge and go left to collect the treasure. Drop down to the ground below and then walk to the first block and jump up and down on the thin piece of ground until you fall through.

WALKOVER IT AIN'T

What an incredible odour. It's the Goblin's Lair. Now the music changes and the atmosphere is dark, damp, deep and dank. Proceed left, collecting money on the way. As you reach the bridge make sure your current weapon is the axe. Don't use it yet! As you approach, the sleeping guard awakens and you pursue him to the drawbridge. Slay the goblin winding in the drawbridge with the axe and use the mace to pummel the door to bits. Enter the lair, climb the first chain and go left. Continue left until you reach the guard house, crouch and activate the switch on the left with your mace. Return to the first chain and climb down the longer one to the main chamber. Collect the key on the right, pick up and fight, but then go left under the cage. Inevitably you are captured and imprisoned with a seated captive. Don't bother with small talk – this character has the personality of a fish finger. Now offer the wine to the guard, and he then takes a trip to wibbly-wobbly, topsey-turvy land. Now smash the door with the mace and scale the chain to slay the guard above to prevent the guard from being awoken. Return to the sleeping guard, kill him, retrieve the key and release the second captive. Now go up and left, kill some goblins and collect the ring. Using the key, open the door and run right to make your way out of the crystal caverns.



TRES DIFFICILE

You now proceed to the waterfall where a large, wet, nasty attacks you. Kindly ask the creature to leave, or if that fails split its head and then jump from rock to rock. Make your way to the next bridge. Pass the bridge and walk right until a large bald nasty takes a swing at you. Lead this huge Kojak-son-of-a-dog into the centre of the bridge where a combination of over-eating and sheer ugliness causes it to fall through. Don't enter the gap! Jump over it and approach the old man. Give him the scroll and ring and take the spell weapon he offers in return.



Now go back to the bridge and fall through the gap. You will be sucked down a whirly-pooly thing.

NOT A CINCH

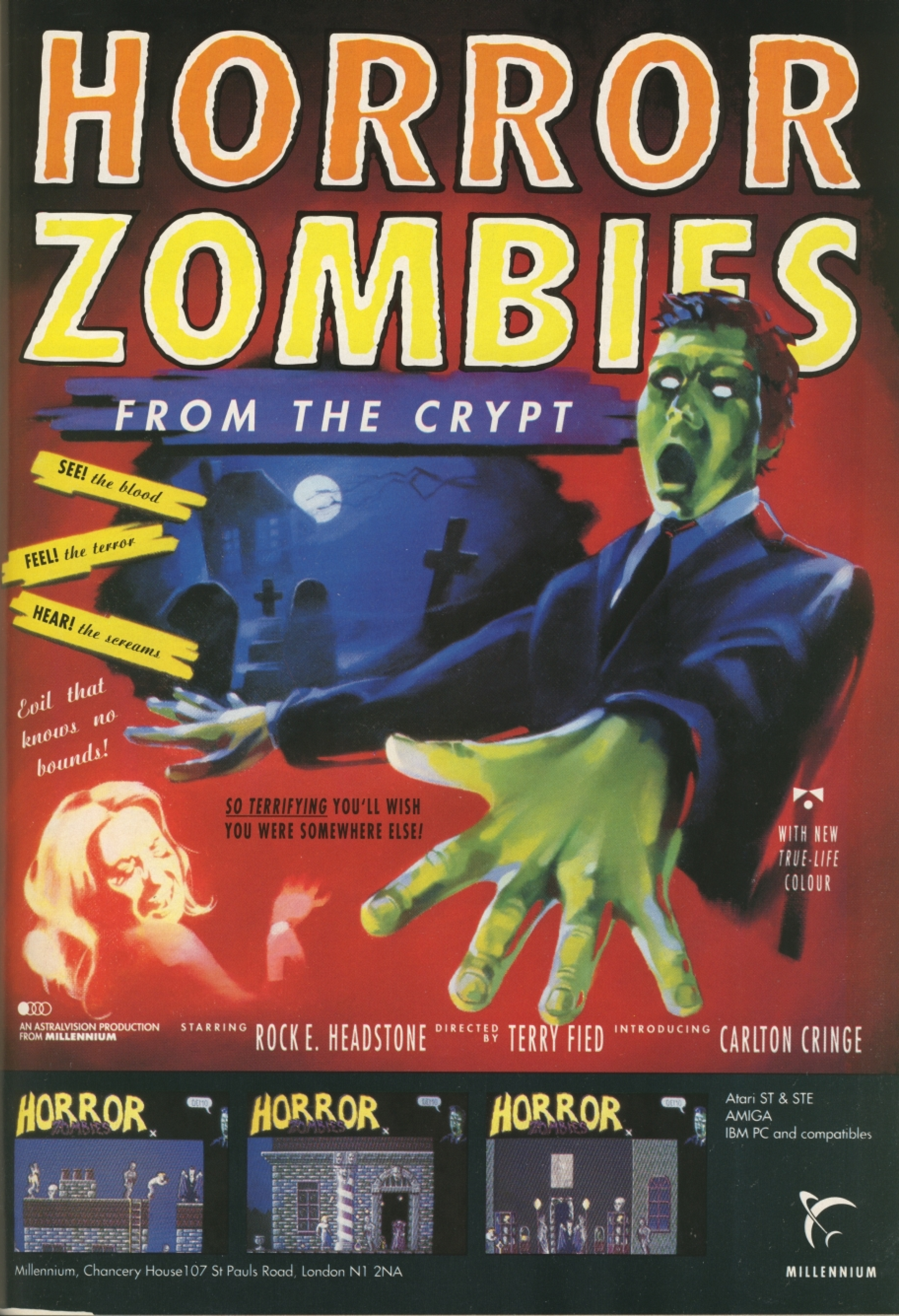
You are in a new world. Find the golden horn (down and right), then go to the snail and ask it about "KARAMOON". It will take all your gold and send you to the old man hut location.

Go right, meet two large guard creatures, whip their hides and continue all the way to the sea. Now blow your horn. It will summon a strange beast (in dire need of dental surgery by the looks of it) which will take you across the sea to the castle and the final encounter location. Eeek! Now go down the stairs and keep right to meet the bad guy himself. Using the spell you can annihilate him safely and complete the game.

CHEAT!

It is not possible to complete the game without a cheat mode so here it is: when you start the game walk right until you are confronted by the first pygmy. Don't attack it. Ask it about 'TEN PINTS' and the cheat will be activated.

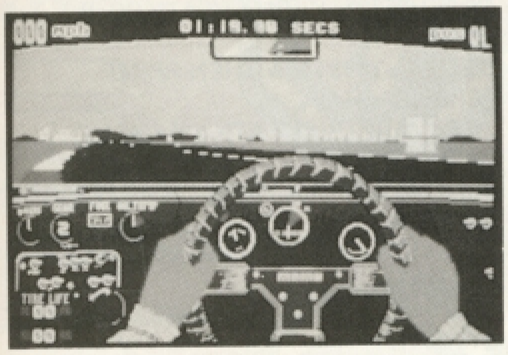
STOP


HORROR
ZOMBIES
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SEE! the blood
FEEL! the terror
HEAR! the screams
Evil that knows no bounds!
SO TERRIFYING YOU'LL WISH YOU WERE SOMEWHERE ELSE!
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IT'S A GOOD GAME
NO IT'S NOT
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"What we have here is a BRILLIANTLY ORIGINAL and witty interpretation of the Python Theme". Zero 89%
"One of the tastiest slices of alternative arcade action since Venezuelan Beaver Cheese". The One 85%
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GUTLESS GULLY

Gutless as in 'completely bereft of any sort of alimentary system'; Gully as in 'a narrow ravine where tiny insects tend to gather'. Gutless Gully: The perfect habitation for a shandy drinker... and who better to compile it than *David 'Pink Straw' McCandless.*



FAST LANE

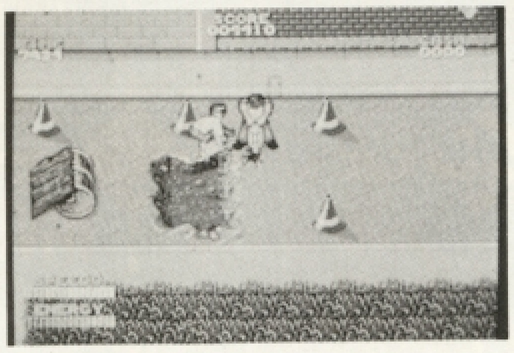
ST Ooh arr. By gum, if it int **Dunstan Farmer** wi' a great straw-chewin', rosy-cheeked, cow-farming, tractor-drivin' cheat for *Fast Lane*. Ooh arr. During qualification, pause the game (with F1) and then unpause it wi' t' spacebar. Your qualifying time is now frozen so you can race around as slowly as you want and still be in pole position. What a stunning piece of playtesting.

SATAN

ST AMIGA Crikey, a cheat that makes *Satan* easier. We should slip it to those tormented souls in Abaddon. There they are, being persecuted and burnt alive for all eternity by Beelzebub and all that crowd, then suddenly **Rajeev Doshi** finds out if you hold down ALT+1+D during game one you receive infinite lives. In game two, hold down ALT+1+M for infinite energy and credits. Not that infinite lives are 100% useful to eternal souls suffering infinite torment, but there you go.

POWERBOAT SIMULATOR

ST I've never heard of this game, but – hey – who cares, it all goes down the same hole. Pause the game with 'P' and then type 'ZIGGY' for infinite lives and time.



SKIDZ

ST **Tom Rye** is certainly determined to leave his mark (hah! – geddit) on this page, not to mention his underpants. During play hold down 'ALTERNATE' and tap 'c' for infinite time and energy, while 'M' skips levels.

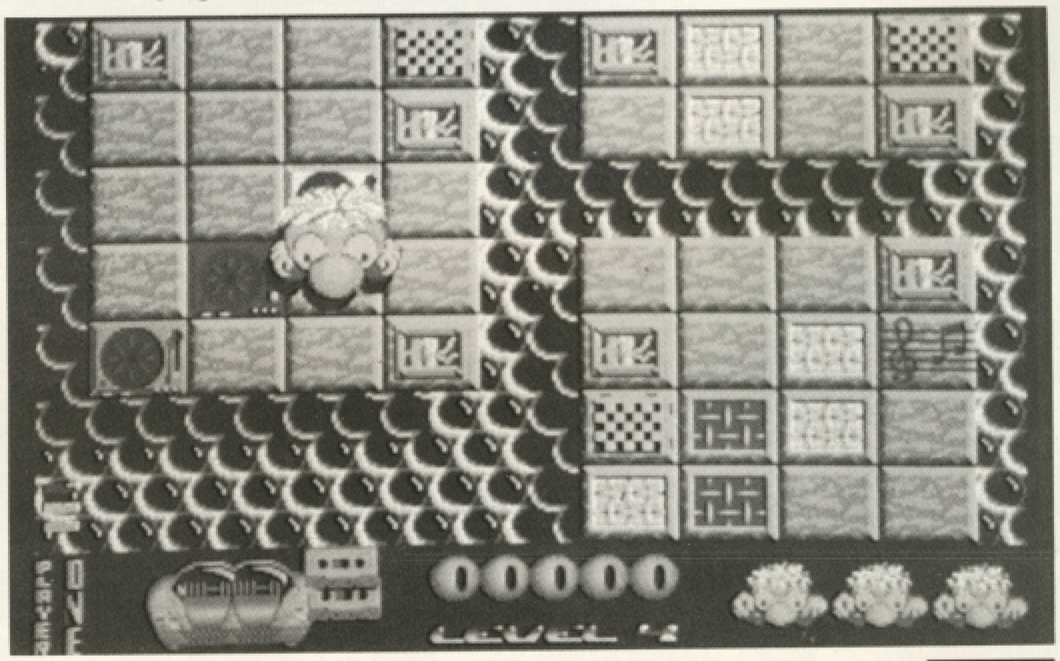
LOST PATROL

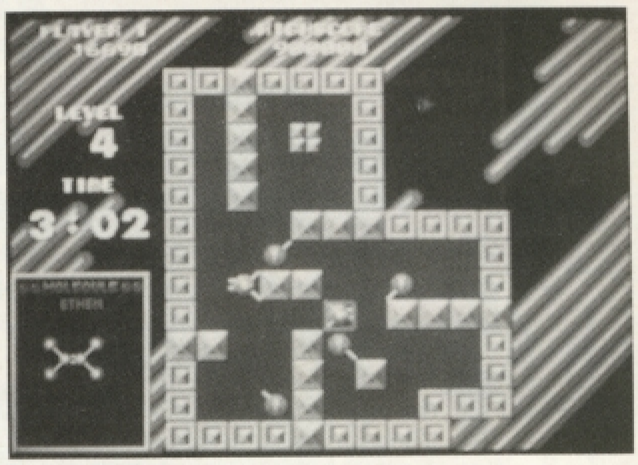
ST AMIGA **James Sherrington** and **Chris 'I can see' Why** have spotted that if you rest for ten minutes, you can restore strength and morale by two points without using up any food. And if you do this repeatedly, everyone will be up to 99 per cent.

TIME BANDIT

ST I've seen that film. And what a mound of jobs it was too. Anyway, **Johnathon Rowson** is an early starter on the shandy (judging by his handwriting). He's sent in a rather cowardly cheat for this game: skip levels by pressing the up cursor during play.

Jump to the beat in Infogrames' bizarre *Jumping Jackson*.





ATOMIX

ST AMIGA Here's a quickie for Rainbow Arts' brain-blendingly difficult nuclear physics puzzle game. Simply tap HELP to enter password mode and enter 'TIME' for a frozen stop clock. Thanks to **me** for that one. *(Hurrah! The Woodpecker Cider's on you then! Ed.)*



MERV THE MERCILESS

AMIGA About time. I wondered how long it would take you Holsten-without-the-Pils people to discover how to shandy on last year's ZERO cover game. **Daniel Pemberton** is guilty for holding the chainsaw and pausing the game which allows you to complete it and see the end message.

JUMPING JACKSON

ST Here are some more ST-exclusive codes for this perplexing jumping game. Try **Kayleigh, Alchemy, Octoberon, Tangram, Incubus, Sirius.**

STOP

IMPROVE YOUR HEX LIFE!

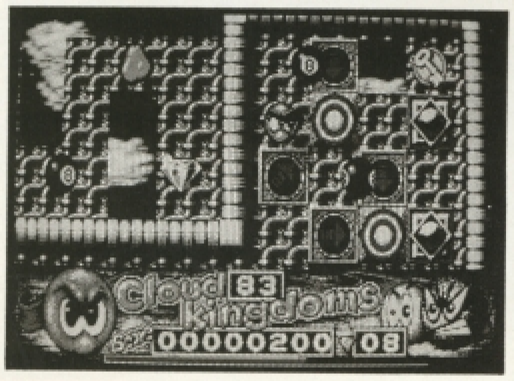
Give us an 'S', give us an 'E', give us an 'X' and what do you get? Er... well, if you minus the 'S' and add an 'H' you get a less saucy but infinitely more exciting time with *Jon North*.

The time is currently 1 o'clock in the morning, I've just finished a 24-hour programming stint and I'm absolutely knackered. Still, what do you care? (*You said it Jon. Ed.*) Here are some pokes.

CLOUD KINGDOMS (AMIGA)

A fairly short listing to start with this month, from a couple of regulars to this column, **Tracey Carter** from Wallington and **Nikki Jackson** from Worcester Park. Thwack this into AmigaBasic and RUN it for infy energy and no time loss when you die.

```
10 REM CLOUD KINGDOMS BY TRACEY
CARTER AND NIKKI JACKSON
20 T=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
30 FOR X=0 TO 121
40 READ
B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):CHEAT%(X)=B:T=T+B
50 NEXT X
60 IF T<>1194202& THEN PRINT
"ERROR":STOP
70 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
80 DATA
4CFA,00C3,0010,2C78,0004,4EAE,FF3A,2840
90 DATA
6612,4E75,0000,2A00,0001,0002,0000,0030
100 DATA
0000,0400,70FF,4EAE,FEB6,4BEC,0048,3AC7
110 DATA
429D,3AC0,5280,67DA,93C9,4EAE,FEDA,2AC0
120 DATA
2A8D,2B4D,0008,589D,4295,4BEC,0008,7A05
130 DATA
1A85,41ED,0038,5C8D,2AC8,3A86,41FA,0084
140 DATA
9080,9281,224C,4EAE,FE44,4A80,66A4,224C
150 DATA
D8FC,0100,337C,0002,001C,41E9,0024,20FC
160 DATA
0000,2800,20CC,20FC,0000,C800,3346,0012
170 DATA
4EAE,FE38,41EC,131C,43FA,000C,701D,30D9
180 DATA
51C8,FFFC,4ED4,7000,323C,025D,343C,00A1
190 DATA
363C,8000,41F9,0005,0EA0,43F8,0800,6100
200 DATA
ECCE,41F9,0001,2650,4250,4268,0094,317C
210 DATA
4E71,06CA,317C,4E71,2FDE,2079,0001,0004
220 DATA
4ED0,7472,6163,6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,7669
230 DATA 6365,0000
```



THE PUNISHER (ST)

Okay. I know that a few of you thought that this game wasn't quite, erm... "up to standard", but here's an infinite health routine from **Linton Simms** (the fastest trolley pusher in Sutton). Type it in and RUN it, and it will create a file called PUNISHER.PRG which you can then execute directly from Desktop.



```
10 REM THE PUNISHER BY LINTON
SIMMS
20 T=0:OPTION BASE 1:DIM
A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0:REM Remove this line if
using new basic
40 FOR X=0 TO 203 STEP 2
50 READ B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):POKE
CHEAT+X,B:T=T+B
60 NEXT X
70 IF T<>&H00152266 THEN PRINT
"ERROR":STOP
80 BSAVE "punisher.prg",CHEAT,204
90 DATA
601A,0000,00AC,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000
100 DATA
0000,0000,0000,0000,0000,0000,4FFA,01FE
110 DATA
4879,0000,0300,487A,FEF4,4879,004A,0000
120 DATA
4E41,4FEF,000C,487A,005A,3F3C,0009,4E41
130 DATA
5C8F,3F3C,0007,4E41,548F,4267,487A,0040
140 DATA
3F3C,004E,4E41,487A,0039,487A,0035,487A
150 DATA
0055,4879,004B,0003,4E41,4FF9,0007,7FF0
160 DATA
2F40,0004,2240,43E9,0100,337C,4A6E,77F4
170 DATA
337C,4A6E,7816,337C,4E71,5C84,4ED1,2A2E
180 DATA
2A00,1B45,496E,7365,7274,2067,616D,6520
190 DATA
6469,736B,2061,6E64,2070,7265,7373,2061
200 DATA
206B,6579,0061,7574,6F5C,7075,6E69,7368
210 DATA
6572,2E70,7267,0090,0000,0000
```

WHAT TO DO

A very original name, even if I do say so myself. Type the listing into Basic on your machine (switch it on first for best results). SAVE it off to a blank disk for future use, insert your game disk, cancel and ignore any requesters saying it's gone Splott. RUN it and it will load the game for you, with the cheats installed.

TURRICAN (AMIGA)

I think this game is very nice indeed, apart from that awful "Welcome to *Turrican*" at the start (that laugh's a bit out of date, isn't it?). Despite that, here's an infy lives routine from yours truly.

```
10 REM TURRICAN BY JON NORTH
20 T=0:DIM CHEAT%(1024)
30 FOR X=0 TO 117
40 READ
B$:B=VAL("&H"+B$):CHEAT%(X)=B:T=T+B
50 NEXT X
60 IF T<>1143118& THEN PRINT
"ERROR":STOP
70 C=VARPTR(CHEAT%(0)):CALL C
80 DATA
4CFA,00C3,0010,2C78,0004,4EAE,FF3A,2840
90 DATA
6612,4E75,0000,0600,0001,0002,0000,0030
100 DATA
0000,0400,70FF,4EAE,FEB6,4BEC,0048,3AC7
110 DATA
429D,3AC0,5280,67DA,93C9,4EAE,FEDA,2AC0
120 DATA
2A8D,2B4D,0008,589D,4295,4BEC,0008,7A05
130 DATA
1A85,41ED,0038,5C8D,2AC8,3A86,41FA,0050
140 DATA
9080,9281,224C,4EAE,FE44,4A80,66A4,224C
150 DATA
D8FC,0100,337C,0002,001C,41E9,0024,9BCD
160 DATA
48D0,3080,3346,0012,4EAE,FE38,41FA,0032
170 DATA
3218,3018,EAB8,D040,3998,0000,0480,07FF
180 DATA
FFFE,64F4,5341,64EA,4EAC,000C,4ED0,7472
190 DATA
6163,6B64,6973,6B2E,6465,7669,6365,0000
200 DATA
0000,0C3F,41FA,0012,43F9,0006,00DE,7409
210 DATA
32D8,51CA,FFFC,4E40,41FA,02D0,20FC,0006
220 DATA
040C,20BC,0006,0188,4278,79AE
```

Did you notice that I didn't print any actual hacks this month? That's because, due to the recent Computer Misuse Act, hacking infy lives is now illegal. All of these routines access in-built cheat modes instead. If you've written any routines to access cheat-modes, send them to me, Jon North, IYHL, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE. T'ra for now.

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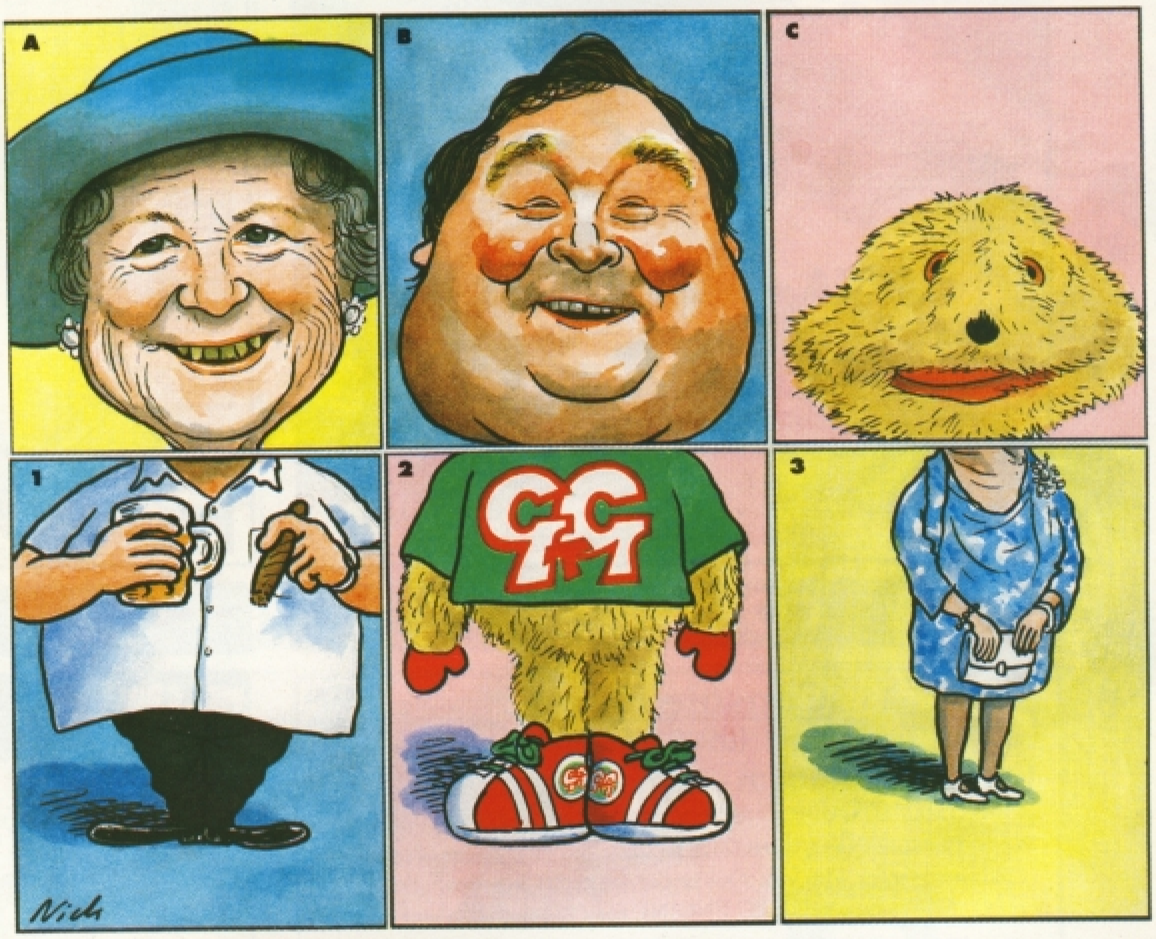
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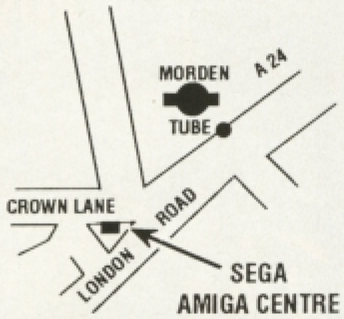
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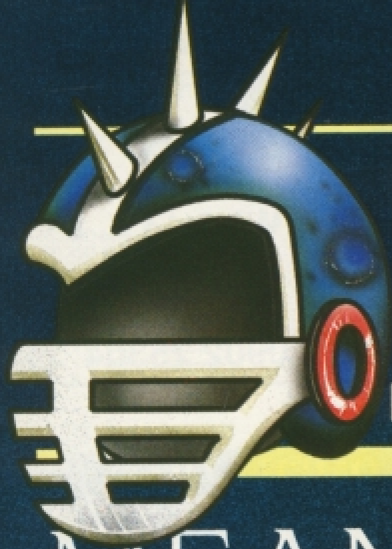
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K-Spread 3	89.95	80.96
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Discover Chemistry	19.95	17.96
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Discover The Alphabet	19.95	17.96
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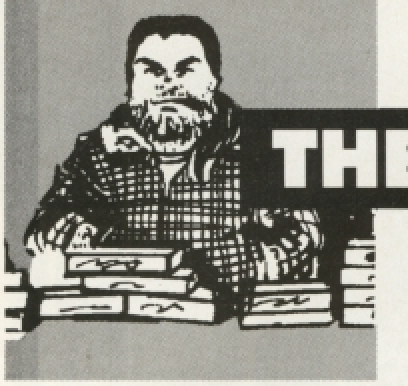
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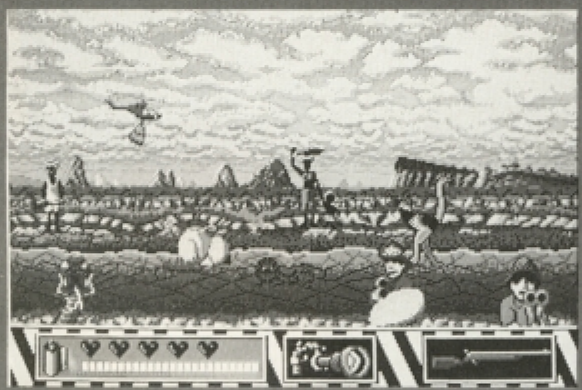
THE PRICE I$ RIGHT

After a resounding spanking for his nefarious activities, Bloggo is finally going straight. His first step to social respectability? A job editing The Price Is Right while Leslie Crowther's on holiday. So, take it away, Bloggo... "What fills your home micro with oodles of game whilst emptying your pocket of minimum wonga? That's right it's the contents of Uncle Bloggo's bargain market stall. Read the reviews, buy a budgie or naff off!"

ON SAFARI

Smash 16/ST, Amiga & PC/£4.99

David: Remember this one? We reviewed it in issue 3. Whadd'ya mean we didn't? It was called *Safari Guns* then, it was by Infogrames, and Dunc rather liked it. Well, here it is on Digital Integration's new(ish) 16-Bit budget label Smash 16. It's actually rather a trendy 'green' game in that your aim is to protect the wildlife of Africa. This is achieved by photographing the animals whilst shooting poachers – not very humanitarian but otherwise these guys will shoot you(!), and all this is done via an *Oppo Wolf* style gun sight cursor and two icons – one for the camera and one for the gun.



The graphics are nice and colourful and the animations of animals sprinting across the savannah are very effective. I liked the summary screen where you see all the 'transparencies' you've taken (including poachers' faces where you've highlighted the camera instead of the gun!) but apart from this *On Safari* is marred by very long inter-level accessing and limited game life expectancy.

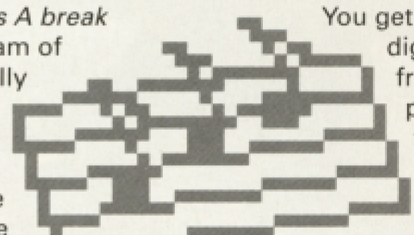
Oh, and how come you don't get to shoot Johnny Morris?

OVERALL SCORE 70

MIKE REID'S POP QUIZ

Encore/ST, Amiga & PC/£9.99

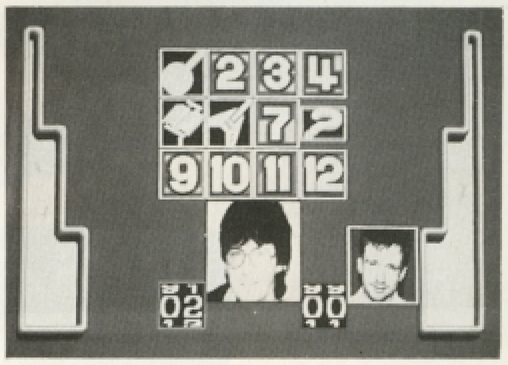
David: I'm never really that convinced that 'quiz' games work on the computer unless it's one of those *Give Us A break* coin-ops where a large team of intellectuals can win equally large sums of cash. *Mike Reid's Computer Pop Quiz* is a case in point. I presume it reproduces the television quiz of the same name (but I've only watched to that about three times, and each time Tim Rice was on it, so I switched off).



Anyway there are five rounds based upon various themes like 'Name the year', 'Spot The Star' and 'Your Scene' (man). Obviously *MRPQ* is a team game and there's a rather daft attempt to reproduce this. When you start either against the computer or a friend, you both need to choose your team mates.

You get a motley selection of digitised pics to choose from – presumably the programming team and their chums – (coincidently the same mugshots crop up as the 'sports personalities' in Encore's *A Question Of Sport* only with different names).

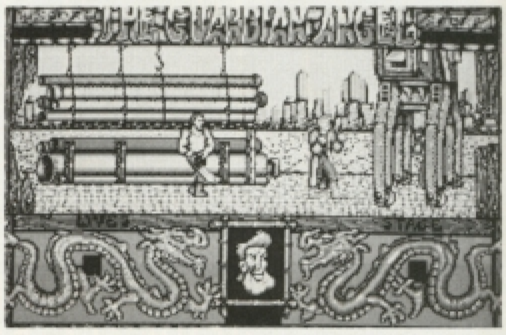
However, the point of this is that team mates have 'specialist skills' er... but since you answer their questions anyway, this won't help you. I also found



on one occasion when I had incorrectly chosen three wrong answers of the four, the computer still couldn't pick the right one! Oh, and on my second game I started to be asked the same questions from the first game! In short then, a bit of a duffer.

OVERALL SCORE 40

GUARDIAN ANGEL



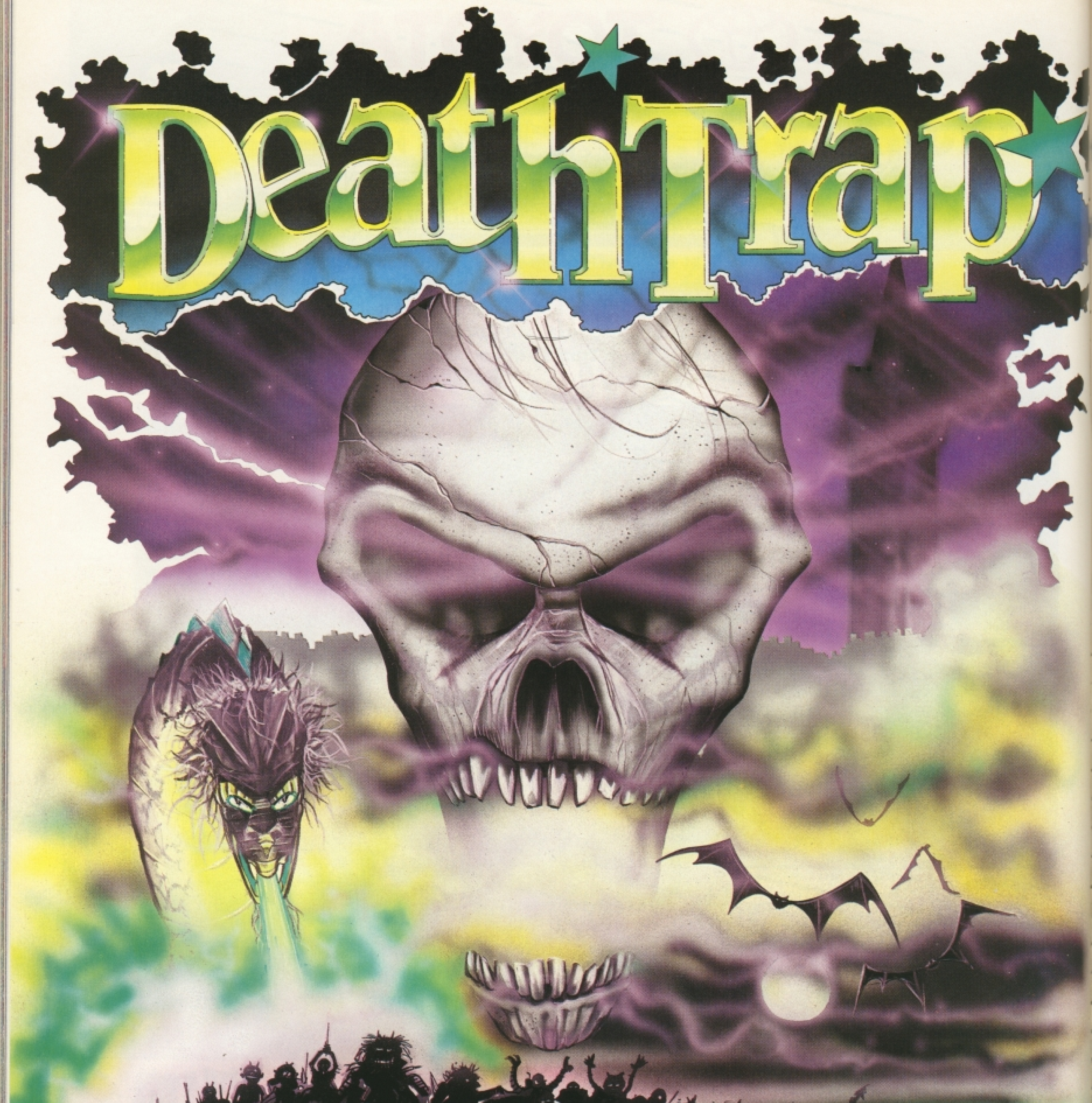
Code Masters/ST & Amiga/£4.99

David: 'Diggy Doo Diggy Day, everything goes my way, when I'm wearing my yellow boots...' – so ran the lyric for the (winning) Norwegian entry in the 1983 Eurovision Song Contest, and you know what? It could almost have been written about *Guardian Angel*, the latest offering from the Codies. Unusually *Guardian Angel* hasn't been written by the Codies, but in fact originally hails from Spanish publishers, Dinamic.

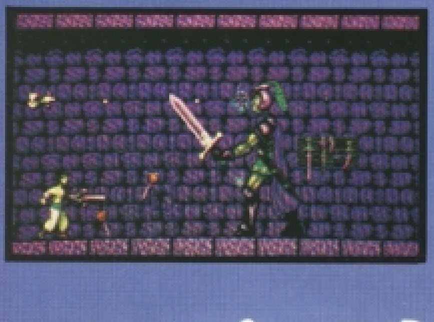
Anyway, it's a horizonally scrolling beat 'em up in which you play a large-chinned, blonde-coiffured hero in blue coat and yellow boots intent upon duffing up hordes of kung fu nasties. Graphics aren't the greatest – little chaps in judo outfits with their arms raised 'threateningly' etcetera – but the sound tries its best to make up for it. "Game Over" it says er... when the game's over. A variety of martial arts moves are open to you and the enemies are also varied from Chainsaw wielders and fork-lift truck drivers. The animations are all rather unconvincing but overall it's a nice little beat 'em up pitched at a fairly challenging level. Not up to the standard of Dinamics' later fare in this genre like *After The War*, but not bad for the price.

OVERALL SCORE 69


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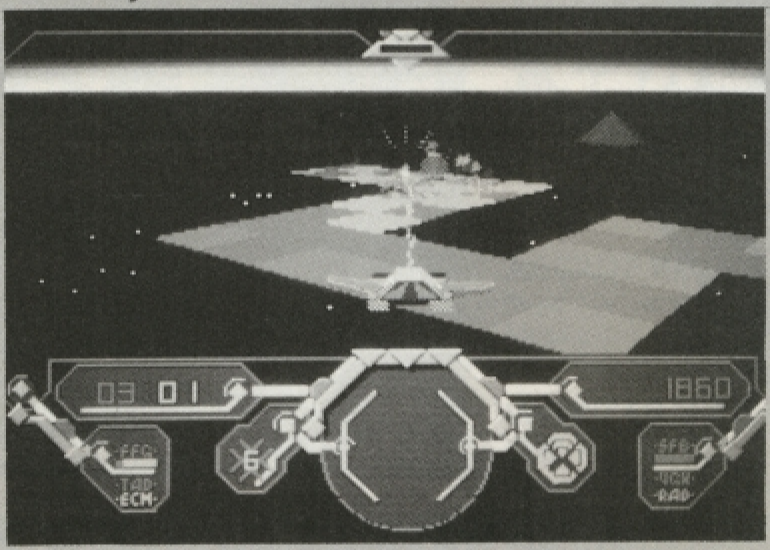
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DÉJÀ VU

We've borrowed many words from the French – *soupçon, blasé, croutons.* This page is called 'Déjà Vu' and has absolutely nothing to do with small squares of toast.

SIMULCRA

Microstyle/£24.99/Out now



AMIGA

David: Latest from the Microprose stable, and hot on the heels of last month's ST version, is *Simulcra*. Imagine you've got a lovely little house (on the prairie) and your house is bordered on three sides by lovely, pleasant rolling landscapes. Then imagine some geeser comes and puts a huge fence all the way around your property. You'd be a mite miffed, wouldn't you? This is the scenario in *Simulcra* (actually it isn't but it's a reasonable analogy).

Your space platform is surrounded by an enemy forcefield and you've go! to shut it down. You do this by shooting out generators, but of course it's not that simple as the platform is populated with hordes of land based and flying aliens, inaccessible bits and static gun turrets. Shooting aliens and the occasional barn (?) produces bonus weapons, fuel, or lives and you'll have to strategically decide the best time to fly etcetera.

Programmed by Graftgold, the guys who brought you *Rainbow Islands* and *Iron Man Off Road Racer, Simulcra* is a challenging shoot 'em up with *Rotox*-y puzzle bits. Rendered in colourful vectors with different weapons and travel methods, Amiga *Simulcra* plays rather similarly to its ST counterpart.

GRAPHICS 85 ADDICTIVENESS 84 SOUND 75 EXECUTION 84 OVERALL 85

WELLTRIS

Infogrames/£29.99/Out now

PC

David: You may have guessed that *Welltris* is the sequel to *Tetris* and, in fact, was programmed by Ruskie gamemaster Alexey 'Platypus' Pajitnov. The ST and Amiga versions came out in August, and now here's the PC version. Take the much copied *Tetris* idea, switch the viewpoint to over-head, add a sort of 3D box grid and a slippery bottom (Oo-er!) and you'll have *Welltris*.

Anyway, gameplay follows the *Tetris* idea with 2D shapes falling down the



sides of the box. These can be rotated as they fall and when they hit the bottom they'll slide to the opposite side. Your objective is to fill the bottom grid interlocking the pieces so that complete lines are filled. These will then disappear. If a piece falls so that a part of it is still on a side, then that side will lock up for several goes. You'll then have to manipulate pieces on the remaining sides – and if all four sides lock up you're dead.

The PC version (despite only offering CGA or EGA graphics) is remarkably similar to the Amiga and ST versions. In this type of game the most important factor is the gameplay, and as you'd expect from the programmer of *Tetris*, *Welltris* has it coming out of its bus ports. If this is your bag, then this is the business.

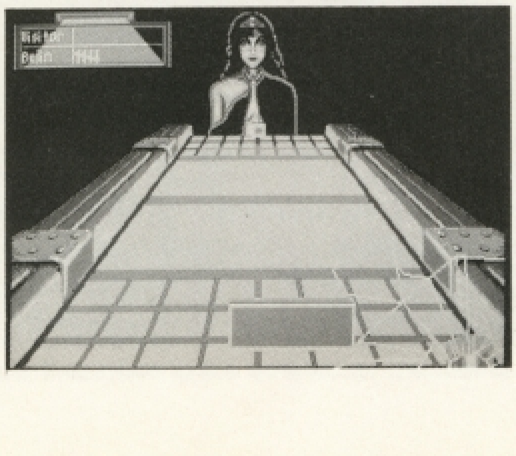
GRAPHICS 70 ADDICTIVENESS 85 SOUND 70 EXECUTION 85 OVERALL 84

SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE

Bröderbund/Domark/ £24.99/Out now (ST and Amiga reviews in issue one)

PC

David: This one came out on the ST and Amiga over a year ago from spook American programming house Bröderbund and pretty dashed popular it was too. *Shufflepuck Café* is based on the arcade game of the same name (that's 'Shufflepuck' not 'café'). If you don't know it, then imagine snooker except instead of sticks (*Cues. Ed.*) you have small, circular, plastic bats (*Paddles. Ed.*) er... then imagine instead of 22 balls you have one flat one, and instead of six pockets, you have two, one at either end.



There you have it – two players whacking a flat disk up and down a large table bouncing off the sides and aiming for each other's goals. Now take this game into a really weird (French) alien café, place it in a first perspective, then fill the aforementioned caff with a host of bizarre opponents and you've got *Shufflepuck Café*. Play is keyboard or mouse-controlled (the latter being the more realistic) and the opponents differ from the crap – a bespectacled chap in an anorak – to the rather hard, which includes a sexy sorceress who employs magic to defeat you!

All the gameplay of the Amiga and ST versions is here along with the lovely little animations and speech of the opponents. The only drawbacks are the usual PC sound limitation and EGA graphics. Quite an original title which you'll keep coming back to. STOP

GRAPHICS 80 ADDICTIVENESS 82 SOUND 78 EXECUTION 80 OVERALL 80



MAD MIKE GOES MANIAC!



It's everyone's favourite adventurer *Mike Gerrard* – sadly minus Clueseau this month but complete with hedgehog attachment, mega solutions, compo results and a new assistant called Gladys. (*Somebody tell his wife. Ed.*)



"CRUSHER" BARNSLEY VERSUS THE MANIAC MONSTER

I've had about eighteen trillion letters all asking for a solution to that Lucas adventure, *Maniac Mansion*, which I had a jolly romp through when I reviewed it last year. So for J.S. Livings of Egham and, erm, eighteen trillion minus one others, here's a full solution to that game from John R. Barnsley, slayer of maniacs by royal appointment. *Maniac Mansion* is on Disk 5 of John's series of solution disks, available for ST and PC users direct from him at 32 Merrivale Road, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffs ST17 9EB. Cost is £2 per disk, including p&p.

So take it away, Crusher... and then bring it back again...

MANIAC MANSION

(Lucasfilm Games)

NOTES

1 There are FIVE possible ways to complete this adventure; this solution works with Dave, Syd and Bernard, and should provide insights into solving the other variations.

2 In all rooms you must OPEN the door and in many you must also TURN ON the light, neither of which is pointed out in this solution.

3 Don't USE the flashlight or the batteries will run out (though you can find more). To find a light switch in the dark, select "WHAT IS" and scan the room by moving the cursor around.

4 There are TWO ways to escape the dungeon. If two kids are trapped there, place one in front of the door and have the other push the loose brick just below the LEFT window to momentarily open the dungeon door. Quickly switch to the other kid, who will have just enough time to run out. The other way is to USE the rusty key.

★★★ ZERO ★★★ COMPLETE SOLUTION

THE SOLUTION

FRONT OF THE HOUSE

All three kids should be here. PICK UP the door mat and GET the key. UNLOCK the front door and send all three inside. Send Bernard to the Library.

LIBRARY

OPEN the loose panel directly below Chuck The Plant and GET the cassette tape. Switch to Dave and send him to the Kitchen.

KITCHEN

Edna catches Dave, which clears the route for the others. Dave can stay in the Dungeon for now and should use the trick described in Note (4) to let the others out when caught. Switch and send Syd into the Storage Room.

STORAGE ROOM

Have Syd PICK UP the fruit drink and glass jar. Switch to Bernard and send him to the Kitchen.

KITCHEN

Get Bernard to PICK UP the flashlight, OPEN the refrigerator and GET the Pepsi can. Switch to Syd and send him to the Kitchen to give the glass jar to Bernard. Sent them both to the Painting Room.

PAINTING ROOM

Syd should PICK UP the wax fruit and Bernard should GET the paint remover.

THE TENTACLE IN THE ATTIC

Send Syd up the next set of stairs to the Top of the Stairs, just outside the Darkroom, where he meets the Green Tentacle. GIVE the wax fruit, followed by the fruit drink to the Tentacle and he'll let you pass.

THE RADIO ROOM

Switch to Bernard and send him here to GET the dime. Then GO LEFT and CLIMB the ladder to the Green Tentacle. GET the record on the shelf and FIND the yellow key behind the Tentacle and GET it. Send Bernard to the Piano Room.

WAS IT THE PIANO ROOM OR WAS IT MEMOREX?

PUT the cassette tape in the cassette recorder. PUT the record on the victrola. TURN ON the cassette recorder and the victrola. Wait until the glass breaks, then TURN them both OFF. Have Bernard GET the tape and go into the Sitting Room.

THE SITTING ROOM

Bernard should OPEN the cabinet and PUT the tape in the cassette player. TURN ON the player and the chandelier will shatter. TURN OFF the player and GET the rusty key that fell from the chandelier. (This unlocks the right door in the Dungeon). OPEN the old radio on top of the cassette player and then GET the radio tube.

WEIGHTLIFTING AND THE HIDDEN GRATE

Send Syd, who may be in the Dungeon by now, to the Weightlifting Room and have him use the Hunk-O-Matic Machine. Then send him outside the front door and to the left of the stairs. PICK UP the bushes to reveal the grate. OPEN the grate, ENTER it and WALK right to the water valve.

OFF TO THE POOL

Send Bernard to Edna's Room and she'll put him in the Dungeon. UNLOCK the door wlth the rusty key. Have him GET the silver key next to the fuse box in the



Sandy's been kidnapped by evil Dr. Fred and all her mates want to do is tango!

basement, then send him to the Storage Room. Get him to UNLOCK the Storage Room with the silver key and go to the pool ladder. FILL the glass jar with water from the pool.

UNDER THE HOUSE

Switch to Syd and have him TURN ON the water valve. This drains the pool and exposes the nuclear reactor's cooling rods, so you have to move fast (a good place to SAVE your game!).

IN THE POOL

When the "cut scene" is over, send Bernard down the ladder to GET the glowing key and the radio. As soon as he's back on the cement, have Syd TURN OFF the water valve to refill the pool.

THE GARAGE

Send Syd and Bernard here and have Syd OPEN the garage door. Bernard should USE the yellow key to OPEN the trunk, then GET the tools.

THE PLANT ROOM AND THE BROKEN WIRES

Send Bernard here to USE the paint remover on paint blotch to reveal a door. OPEN the door and ENTER the Broken Wires Room. TURN ON the light, OPEN the radio, USE batteries in flashlight, TURN ON flashlight, WALK to wires.

THE FUSE BOX

Send Syd into Edna's Room and she'll put him in the Dungeon. Have Dave PUSH the loose brick to free Syd, then position Syd in front of the Open fuse box and TURN OFF the circuit breakers.

BROKEN WIRES ROOM

When the "cut scene" ends, Bernard should FIX the wires with the tools. Now switch to Syd and TURN ON the circuit breakers. (The video machines are now powered on.)

EDNA AND THE WALL SAFE ROOM

Send Syd and Bernard to the hall outside Edna's Room and have Bernard OPEN the door and ENTER. While Edna takes him to the Dungeon, send Syd into her room and GO RIGHT to the ladder. CLIMB the ladder to the Safe room. TURN ON light and OPEN painting to reveal a wall safe.

THE MAN-EATING PLANT

Have Bernard USE the rusty key so he and Dave can escape the Dungeon. Send Bernard to the Plant Room and USE Pepsi to Man-eating Plant. CLIMB UP the plant to the Telescope Room.

TELESCOPE ROOM

Bernard should USE the dime in the slot, then PRESS the right button to turn the telescope to the right.

WEIRD ED'S ROOM

Send Dave and Bernard to the doorway outside Ed's Room and have Bernard GIVE the rusty key and glowing key to Dave. Dave should OPEN the door and enter Ed's. When Ed takes Dave to the Dungeon, send Bernie into Ed's Room where he must WALK to the piggy bank, OPEN the piggy bank, TAKE another dime, then GO to the Telescope Room.

TELESCOPE ROOM

Bernard should USE the dime in the slot, PRESS the right button to turn the telescope to the right, then USE the telescope to READ the combination of the wall safe.

THE SAFE ROOM AND THE SECRET LAB

Switch to Syd and OPEN the wall safe with the combination that you now know! GET the envelope, OPEN it and GET the quarter. Now send Syd back down the ladder, where Edna will catch him and lock him in the Dungeon with Dave. Switch to Dave, who should WALK to the outer door and UNLOCK the top and bottom padlocks with the glowing key. OPEN the outer door to the Secret Lab. Have Dave UNLOCK the right Dungeon door with the rusty key.

ARCADE ROOM

Send Syd here and PLAY the Meteor Mess game with the quarter. Write down the high score.

WEIRD ED'S ROOM AND THE HAMSTER

Send Syd and Bernard to the doorway outside Ed's Room. Have Syd OPEN the door and ENTER. When Ed takes him to the Dungeon, send in Bernard to GET the hamster and reveal the purple card key. GET this and send Bernard to the Radio Room. (He may get locked in the Dungeon first, however.)

INTO THE SECRET LAB

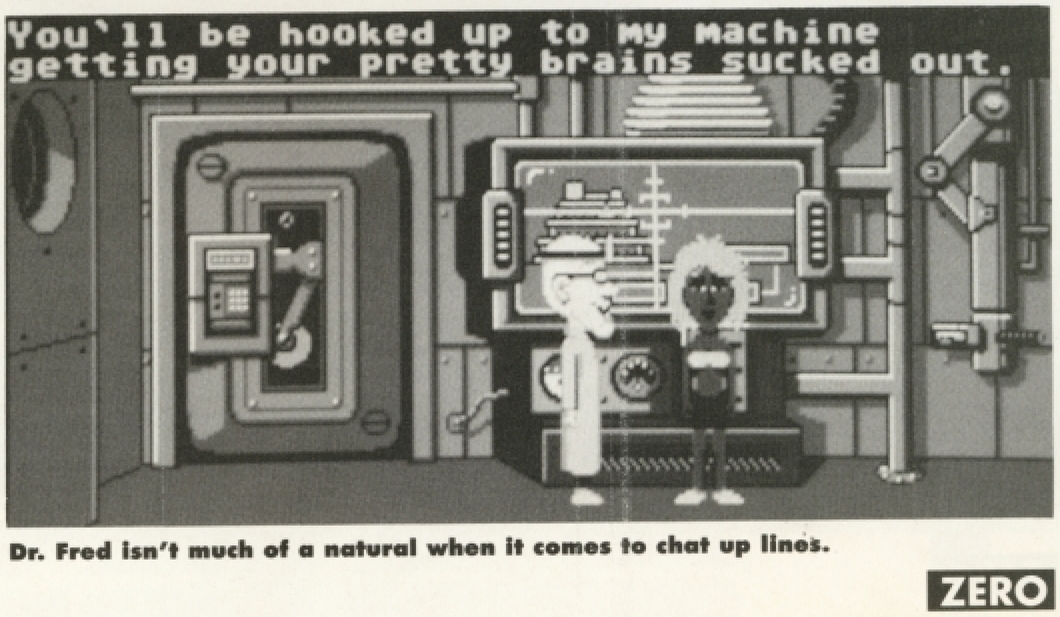
Switch to Dave, who is here, and have him OPEN the inner door to the Secret Lab with the high score from the Meteor Mess game for the combination.

CALLING THE METEOR POLICE

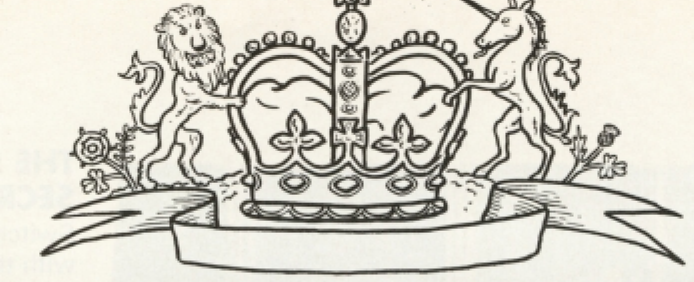
Switch to Bernard in the Radio Room and have him USE the radio tube in the tube radio. READ the poster, TURN ON radio, USE radio to call Meteor Police with the number from the poster. Now send Bernard to Edna's Room so he'll get put in the Dungeon. Then WAIT for the Meteor Police to arrive and take out the Purple Meteor.

THE ZOM-B-MATIC ROOM AND THE METEOR ROOM

Switch to Bernard in the Dungeon, who should GET the badge on the floor and GO to the Secret Lab. GIVE the badge to the Purple Tentacle. After it scarpers, enter Zom-B-Matic Room. WALK right and USE the purple card key in the key slot to enter the Meteor Room. TURN OFF switch. End of game. Easy eh?



Dr. Fred isn't much of a natural when it comes to chat up lines.



KING'S QUEST QUICKIE

Fancy a quickie? Well in response to 3,719,203 requests for more solutions in the Adventure section, here's a quick(ish) solution to Sierra's *King's Quest I*, as provided by Phil Thompson of Welsh Wales. It's all yours, to cut out 'n' keep, or roll into a pellet and insert up your left nostril. But you'd have to be a pretty silly sausage to want to do that, wouldn't you?

Go west, open the door and follow the corridor along to the King. TALK KING and then go back outside. Go northwest to the garden and take the carrot, then go West/South/West till you get to the rock. Stand North of the rock and MOVE ROCK, LOOK HOLE, TAKE DAGGER. Go West to the pond and swim across. Go West twice then North and get the clover. Return to the gate. OPEN GATE then SHOW CARROT to the goat. Cross the bridge and try to guess the old creature's name, although even if you get it wrong, he still generously gives you the gold key.

Return to the well and stand to the north of it. CUT ROPE, LOWER ROPE, CLIMB DOWN (use the down arrow). SWIM, FILL BUCKET then dive to the bottom and swim South West through the hole and THROW WATER at the dragon. Take the magic mirror, leave the cave and you will see a giant condor.

Go South twice, LOOK IN STUMP, TAKE POUCH. Go East, swim across East again to where you found the dagger, go North, CLIMB TREE, LOOK NEST, GET EGG. Go North twice, GET WALNUT, OPEN WALNUT, go East and TAKE BOWL. Go to the woodcutter's and GIVE BOWL then FILL. TAKE FIDDLE, go to the witch's house, hide in the bedroom and when the witch goes to the oven, PUSH WITCH.

Now go to the entrance to the giant's stairs and USE KEY to climb the stairs. Hide behind a tree and when the giant goes to sleep you should TAKE CHEST. Return to the screen wlth the condor on it and jump. When the condor drops you go West and GET MUSHROOMS, then back East down the hole, West, GIVE CHEESE to the rat, West again past the leprechaun, play the fiddle for the King, GET SHIELD EAT MUSHROOMS and go through the hole. Finally return to the castle and TALK KING to finish the game.



THE CASTLE MASTER COMPO DISASTER

What a load of right pillocks you are. And possibly left ones as well. A few months ago I set a compo to win one Amiga or one ST copy of Domark's triffic *Castle Master*, as written by Incentive Software. I asked a dead simple question, which was to name Incentive's first ever adventure release. I got postcards saying it was everything from the *Graphics Adventure Creator*, which obviously isn't an adventure anyway, to the *Colossal Cave Adventure*, which wasn't published by Incentive ever in the history of time.

The right answer, of course, was *The Mountains of Ket*, released for the Spectrum and other 8-bit machines way back when our youthful editor was merely knee-high to a paradiddle. Thank the lawdy, miss clawdy, that there are at least some of you out there with a few brain cells who managed to get it right. Bad luck, Neil Talbott of Bromsgrove, who got it right but didn't say which machine he's got so he didn't go into the sweaty sock for the grand prize draw. So first out of the left sock, for ST owners, is.... can I have the envelope Gladys? And the winner is... Jon Simcoe of Kettering, Northants. Yay, Jon!

And from the right sock for Amiga owners... thank you, Gladys (my glamorous assistant)... the winner is... C. Why of Cathiron in Warwickshire. Well done, oh wise Mr Why. Your games are whizzing off to you pronto.

BEARDS OF A FEATHER

Unfortunately Clueseau is undergoing therapy and is unable to join us this month though he perked up considerably when I informed him of this month's *Maniac Mansion* solution. However, I'm not sure how good an idea it is to let him loose on a game bearing such an emotive title. But as I know you'll agree he has a heart the size of baboon even if he is a few sandwiches short of a picnic. So come all my little beards and beardettes (hem) keep those tips, cheats and any other little snippets coming so that the mad old Frenchman may grace this page with his presence once more. Send them to me The Man With The Beard, Adventures, ZERO, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.

STOP



PUZZNIC
The latest and greatest puzzle game to hit the Western World has now come to your computer! The best-selling coin-op game by Taito employs 144 levels of fiendish perplexity as you position the blocks and make them disappear.
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ZERO

ISSUE FOURTEEN

CONSOLE ACTION

INSIDE

PC Engine Operation Wolf review

Paperboy preview on **Lynx**

Dr Mario in session on the **Game Boy**

At last: **Mega Drive** Klax

Euro **PC Engine** a possibility (again)

Turtley mutant explosive pizza punch ups on the **Game Boy**

Plus news, reviews, tips and cheats

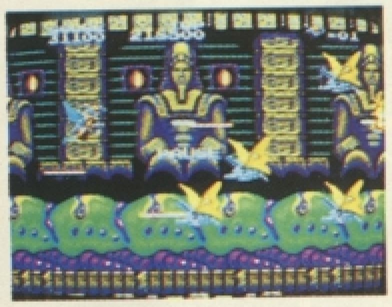
WHO'S BAD!



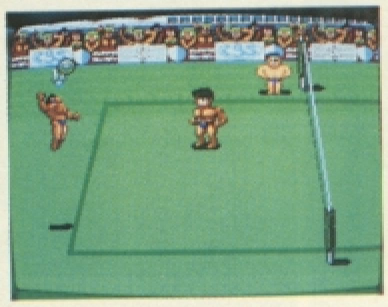
Michael Jackson's sensational world of music and dance exposed in *Moonwalker*

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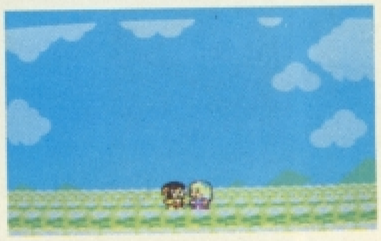
REVIEWED



INSECTOR X
Splat pests in this fabulous Mega Drive shoot 'em up



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QUICKIES

Electronic Arts should have some goodies out for the Mega Drive by the time you read this: *Populous, Zany Golf* and *Budokan*. EA has publishing arrangements with countless major software houses including Ocean, Ubisoft, Discovery and Cinemaware. All EA Sega Mega Drive titles will be distributed by Virgin.

Imagitec Design – the development team responsible for the computer games *Rock 'N' Roll, Gemini Wing, Combo Racer* and many others – have a couple of Lynx projects on the way. Namely *Prophecy I – The Viking Child* and *Prophecy II – The Warriors Wrath*.

The International Development Group (IDG), responsible for the highly successful Rainbow Arts label, has four Sega Master System games due for release during next year under its new label Tecmagik. *Pacmania* will be the first with *Populous* and *Shadow Of The Beast* following shortly after. The fourth title has yet to be named, but expect it to be hot stuff as it is due for release in the run up to Christmas 1991.

Following are the titles available for the UK Mega Drive from Virgin: *Thunderforce II, Alex Kidd (Enchanted Castle), Mystic Defender, Space Harrier II, Last Battle, Rambo III, Truxton (aka Tatsujin), Super Hang On, Ghouls 'N' Ghosts, Forgotten Worlds, Super Thunderblade, Revenge of Shinobi* (aka *The Super Shinobi*), *Golden Axe* and *Zoom*. Phew! All titles retail for £34.99 except *Alex Kidd, Rambo III* and *Zoom* which go for £29.99 and *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* which costs £44.99 (ouch!).

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Bizarre or what? First those nice people from NEC say they will officially launch the PC Engine in the UK. Then they say they won't. Now they're saying they will again.

Just to confuse matters, NEC has given Austrian firm Digital Image Systems the European distribution rights until the middle of 1991 when, say NEC, it'll be looking after matters in the UK (and presumably the rest of Europe).

So what does this all mean? For starters most PC Engine grey importers to date have been selling the Japanese Engine and not the American TurboGrafx-16. You guessed it, Digital Image Systems will be flogging the American system and games. Unfortunately Japanese games won't run on American machines and vice versa.

And what does Ivor think of it all: "Well as long as I can ferry me passengers to and from Wales I'll be happy."



NEC's PC Engine: UK launch looks certain. Oh no it doesn't. Oh yes it does. Oh no...

LOADS OF LYNX LAUNCHES

And about time too. The Lynx is to get six new software titles by the end of the year. Hurrah. Promised for the Christmas period are *Zarlor Mercenary, Xenophobe, Paperboy, Slime World, Road Blasters* and *Klax*.

ZARLOR MERCENARY

You play a retired warship commander whiling away his days working for the local newspaper. An advertisement catches your eye. Experienced warship pilots wanted... and so off to war you go.

XENOPHOBE

A space station has been invaded by Xenos, skin-sucking caterpillars. An ill-equipped group of astronauts are despatched to exterminate the wicked menace. So, off to war you go again.

PAPERBOY



The object is to hurl newspapers onto the porch of certain houses, avoid obstacles and earn bonus points for throwing papers through non-subscribers' windows. But then you knew that.

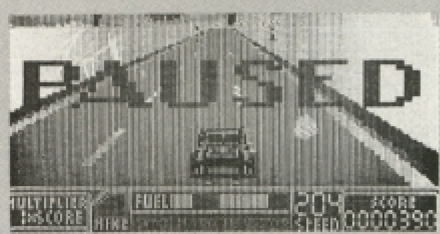
KLAX

Read the Mega Drive review in this month's issue.

SLIME WORLD

In this multi-player game you control a character called Todd. On Slime World, a planet dripping in goo and gunge, you get involved in all sorts of messy adventures.

ROAD BLASTERS



If you're tired of racing around circuits with other drivers hogging the road, this could be the race for you. If anyone gets in the way simply blast them off the road with your laser.

KLAX

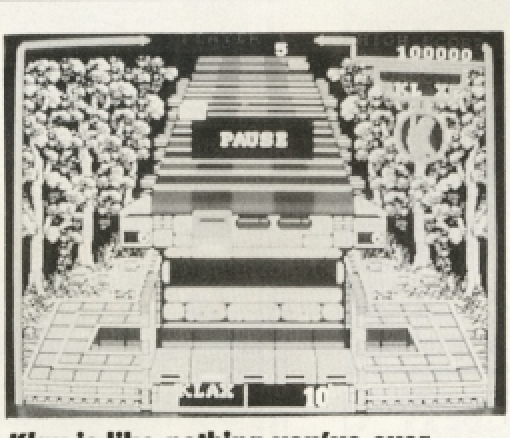
Namcot/£35/Mega Drive

According to Domark, who handled the home computer formats, a klax is a collection of three tiles of the same colour arranged either vertically or horizontally. Despite several exhaustive attempts, I couldn't find a dictionary to concur this.

You're faced with a vertical stretch of play area. Different coloured tiles flip end over end towards you. A flipper towards the bottom of the screen can balance up to five tiles. Below the flipper lies a row of five bins. It is into these bins you must deposit tiles to form klaxes.

As you progress through the levels, tiles come at you faster and faster. At the beginning of each level a female Japanese voice will screech out the type of klax (diagonal, vertical or horizontal) necessary to complete the wave. If you do well the same Japanese voice will shout "velly good". Do badly and it's "ooh no, tly again".

Like *Dr Mario* reviewed on page 119 of this issue, *Klax* is incredibly simple to play yet frustratingly difficult to master. One play is fun, but simultaneous two-player hooks you and just doesn't let go.



***Klax* is like nothing you've ever experienced. Erm, well except for *Tetris* perhaps.**

THE VERDICT 85

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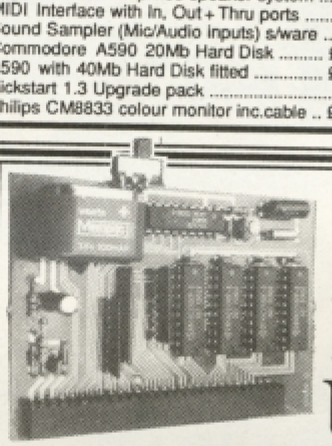
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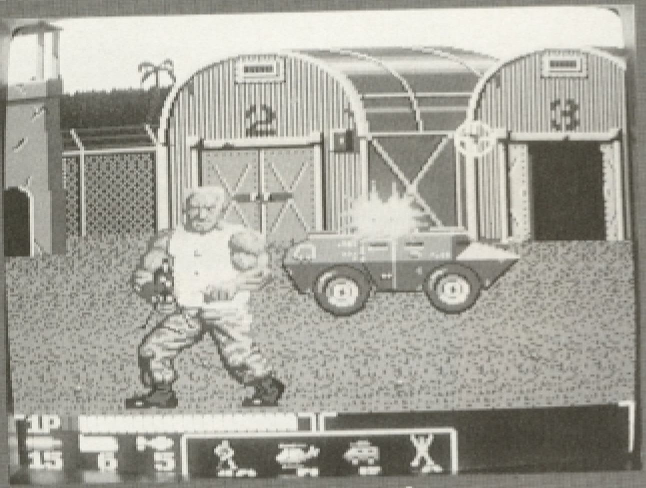
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OPERATION WOLF



NEC Avenue/£35/PC Engine



Funny, they don't look pleased to see you.

And you thought it took a long time for the Sega Master System version of Taito's coin-op shoot 'em up to come storming onto the scene. Well it's nothing compared to the Engine version. It's now been well over three years since the coin-op first appeared; the arcades are several operations ahead. Still, better the late blast than no blast.

The idea, as if you don't know, is to run around with a big gun and a handful of grenades and kill as many gooks as possible. The enemy come at you from the sky, trees, bushes, tanks, helicopters, boats... No matter, you've still got to blow their little tweed socks off.

Regardless of what comes at you, the speed remains constant – damn fast. Most impressive when you consider some of the enemy sprites fill over a third of the screen. Even better is the fact that two players can shoot simultaneously.

Operation Wolf was a classic in its day, but today looks tired against the latest selection of blood 'n' bullets blasters. Despite that, it's immensely playable on the Engine – more so than the 16-bit versions.

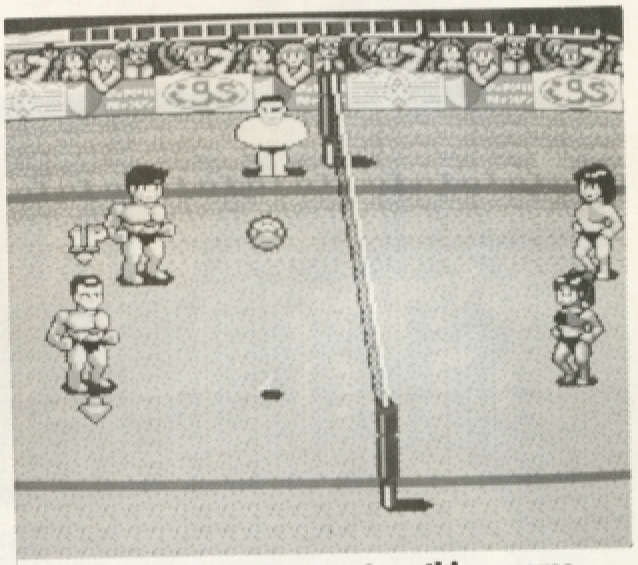
THE VERDICT 86

WORLD BEACH VOLLEY

IGS/£35/PC Engine

Following not so hot on the heels of the Ocean France volley ball simulation released last year is IGS's very similar offering on the Engine. Question is – is *World Beach Volley* a rip-off of the original Ocean computer version, *Beach Volley*? Probably!

Up to four people can participate simultaneously with an appropriate adapter. Each team comprises two players. Being a so-called world event you get to choose players from various nations including Japan, America, Brasil and Russia. A summary of each player also appears on screen. Summaries like 'a precise colourful toss work player' make the mind boggle though.



You've got to admit, there's nothing worse than being beaten by a couple of girlies – even if they are computer controlled.

Having selected a player you can tweek his or her power, stamina, technique and jumping ability. But enough about the technicalities – on to the match. There are loads of moves available to you: spike, smash, toss (?), serve, pass. Unfortunately the whole volley ball pitch doesn't appear on screen. For example if an opponent bats the ball over the net, the screen scrolls and if you're lucky you see the ball (or rather guess where it will land) before it hits the dirt. It's this that spoils *Beach Volley*. Four player can be fun, but when you have to guess the ball's whereabouts – forget it!

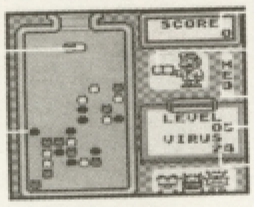
THE VERDICT 68

DR MARIO

Nintendo/£26/Game Boy

Put Mario's name to a cartridge and it's guaranteed to sell. If Nintendo get away with this game, prepare to be bombarded with millions – well, one or two – *Tetris* clones. Although your aim isn't to arrange a variety of odd shapes in a heap at the bottom of the screen, your job is very similar.

There's only one object (capsule) to arrange – however, the capsule comes in six shades: black, grey, white, half black and half grey, half white and half black, half grey and half white. In *Connect 4* style you must line up four like coloured half-capsules. Confused? Just get four colours in a row or column and the capsules in the line disappear.



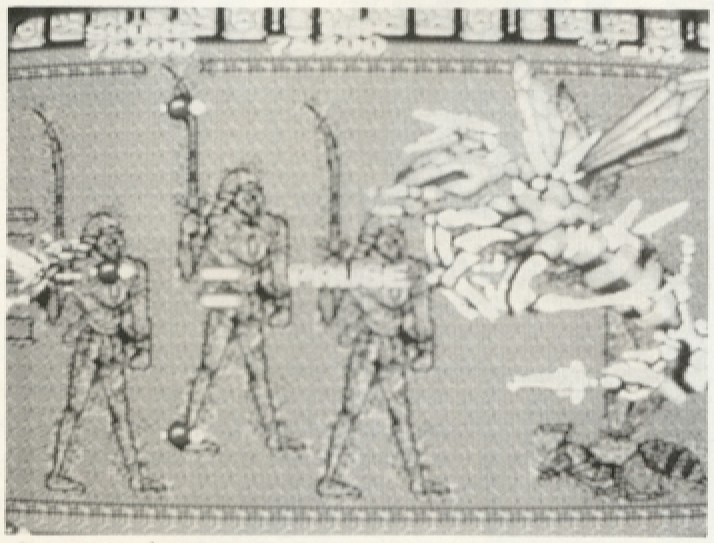
Fun even if you happen to be colour blind.

Right, now storyline time. A collection of viruses have been captured in a bottle by Dr Mario. By chucking in various capsules, Mario can kill the various viruses. Like capsules, viruses come in different shades. It's up to you to match the virus colour with the capsule colour. Sounds jolly confusing, but – like *Tetris* – is easy to play and impossible to master.

THE VERDICT 89

INSECTOR X

Hot B/£35/Mega Drive



That's one huge end of level mutant insect you've got to defeat. With your pathetic weaponry it doesn't look as though you're going to get very far.

Playing *Insector X* brings a whole new meaning to the phrase the birds and the bees. Forget bonking – because that's not what this shoot 'em up is all about. It is in fact about, erm, shooting things. Birds, bees, spiders and lots of other repugnant mutant ninja insect filth.

There are five levels – which take place in the desert, plateau, city, jungle and their empire – to blast your way through. The further you progress, the more vicious and varied the insects become. The graphics are certainly among the most impressive so far on the Mega Drive. Most of the background visuals are retouched digitised pictures.

Shooting carrier insects results in a pod being left behind. These range from extra points to power-ups. Special weapons are also deposited from time to time by insects. These give you wider shot, circular all-round shot, double and quadruple shot, rockets and many others.

Although there are only five levels, each is split into two parts and there's a huge end of level guardian to destroy at the end of the second stage.

While not in the same league as *Thunderforce III*, *Insector X* is varied enough to keep trigger happy insectophobiacs enthralled.

THE VERDICT 81

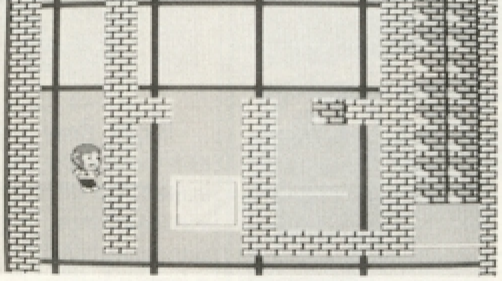
ALEX KIDD IN SHINOBI WORLD

Sega/£29.99/Sega Master System

Little Alex O Sahl, the lad with pointy ears and a funny walk, lived a serene life as the Prince of Aries until one day he decided to check out how his bit of stuff was doing in Shinobi World. Not very well, it seems, because the dark ninja kidnapped her and has kept her bare foot etc. doing his devious deeds.

Naturally Alex puffed up his pointy ears and decided to do something about it. After all, it was Alex who normally had her bare foot etc.

Your aim is to beat, kick, and shoot anything that comes your way as you search for Yoko. You begin with a short sword, but can pick up better weapons along the way. Alex has a couple of very wacky moves up his kimono (oo-er). When hanging from a street lamp, iron bar or other object, Alex can turn into a fire ball and destroy anything in his path. Also, it seems that Alex has been taking lessons from Spiderman – he can bound up vertical walls!



Look out here comes Spiderman. Well, Alex Kidd doing a Spiderman impression anyway.

The scrolling is smooth and, as you don't get too many of the dark ninja's minions attacking you at once, the sprites are well animated. *Shinobi* is not merely a hack and slay affair, but a puzzling game too.

Fans of the Kidd will love it.

THE VERDICT 78

CHEATS!

This is the place to come for a hack attack!

PARANOIA

PC Engine

On the title screen hold down buttons I, II, Select and Run to enter the music test section. Pushing up or down on the joypad selects, and button II plays the various musical ditties.

AFTER BURNER

Mega Drive

Hold down buttons A, B and C and press Start. You will be able to select the start level (1 to 20). Selecting level 20 means you only have to complete three levels to finish the game.

FANTASY ZONE

Sega Master System

Buy all the engine parts and the ship's weapons will never run out.

CHOPLIFTER

Sega Master System

On the second stage fly behind the battle ship and shoot; Jaws will appear. On level three travel backwards past the lava pit. Shoot the first enemy rocket base several times to see Superman.

SEGA MS

If you've got a Sega with built in *Hang-On*, turn on the power without a game in the cartridge slot. Instructions for playing *Hang-On* will eventually appear. Press buttons 1, 2 and left or right. A blue maze will appear.

MOTOCROSS MANIACS

On the loops you can pick up so much speed that you land in a rut and bypass all the jumps. As you jump into a loop press button B quickly and repeatedly for Super Turbo Power. You'll land with extra force and ride below the surface of the track!

Jeremy Barrett, Manchester

SUPER SHINOBI

Mega Drive

On the options screen select 00 shurikens and don't touch anything for around 10 seconds. The 00 symbol will turn into an 8 on its side. Play the game and you will have infinite shurikens.

GOOD GAME, GOOD GAME

Oooh didn't he do well? Come on give him a round of applause. Well done, **Jeremy.** Now what have you won? Oooh there's a toaster, crystal glasses, decanter, personal headphones, portable TV, mini dishwasher*... oooh, now didn't he do well? Like Jeremy, you could walk off with loads of prizes. Simply send your game-busting ploys to **Cheat! Console Action, ZERO, Dennis Publishing, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE.**

MOONWALKER

Sega/£35/Mega Drive

CONSOLE CLASSIC

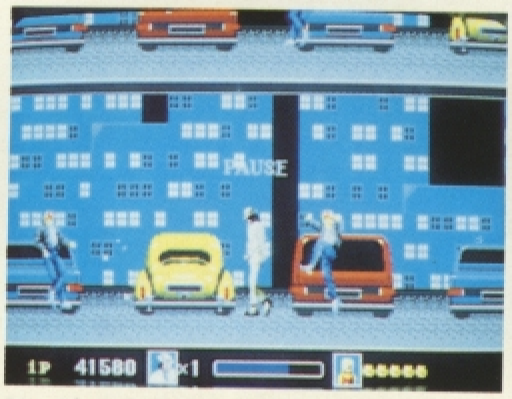
He may be a freak, but you've got to admit – Michael Jackson is one cool dude. After all, who else can get away with the kind of things Michael gets up to? He lives in an oxygen tent, bathes in bleach and to top it all, his best friend's a chimp! If anyone else tried half the antics Michael gets up to, they'd be wheeled off to the funny farm.

But that's no reason to put old Mikey-boy down – no sir-ee, Michael's a good, clean, wholesome kind of guy. When he's not plugging Pepsi, hanging out with the President or taking Brooke Shields to the Grammies, Mike's rather keen on releasing the occasional song to make ends meet.

But now Mike's risen to even greater heights – after conquering vinyl and celluloid formats, he's on silicon (some would argue he's on something much stronger!). US Gold produced a fairly naff game earlier this year for the home computer, but Sega has thankfully plumped instead for a conversion of the recently released coin-op. Unfortunately,



Bubbles kindly points Michael in the direction of Mr. Big.



Mr. Big's henchmen have hidden the poor little girlies in all sorts of places. Here, you've got to search the boots of these cars, but be sure to watch out for the hoodlums.

Sega has copped out a tad by losing the coin-op's 3D isometric graphics. Instead, the action is in good old 2D.

The aim of the game is to rescue a remarkably large number of young blonde girlies from the clutches of the town's resident meanie, Mr Big. Press the start button on the Mega Drive controller, and Michael – dressed in a very tasteful off-white suit – slithers on screen with hat perched forward covering his surgically sculptured features. Just to let you know what a cool guy he really is, Mike flips a coin across the room into a jukebox which spins to life with Michael's hit single, *Smooth Criminal*. Oooh...

Mike must travel around each level searching for his young female friends locked away behind closed doors. Mike, being the dude he is, doesn't need a key – a quick movement from that bleached body followed by a high pitched 'Oooh' is all it takes. That's not to say that Mike's got it all his own way. For starters Mr. Big has sent out his hoodlums in an attempt to thwart Michael's good intentions. These shady characters, who actually look more like those lovable rogues, Jake and Elwood – aka the Bothers Blue – come at Mike from all directions. Sometimes the sneeky chaps will even hide behind the doors, catching old Mike unawares as he searches for the kidnapped girlies.

It's not just the hoodlums that Mike has to watch out for though. Out to pollute his



Mr. Big, complete with shoulder pads, gets ready to vacate the premises – but not before giving Michael a bit of jip.

THE MANY MOVES OF MR JACKSON

Mike's a mean dude when it comes to strutting his stuff – he can move parts of his body that you never knew existed (they probably don't on normal people – Mike's had a fair few bits grafted on here and there).

If you hold down the direction controller while pressing one of the three buttons, Mike will carry out one of a multitude of different Jacko dance steps. These steps are really what make the game – from his tip-toe head back 'Oooh!' stance to the brilliantly executed pirouette as he opens a door. The onscreen Michael makes you sick because, like the real man, you haven't a hope of doing any of these moves yourself.

JUMP



With an 'oooh' Mike leaps in the air and will either clutch his genitalia or wave his hands in the air like he really don't care.

ATTACK



The high kick, the one knee affair, the John Travolta rip-off and the traffic policeman moves are all guaranteed to give a henchman a headache.

MAGIC

When there are numerous villains on screen, it's possible to get Mike to do spins and then lean. All the bad guys do likewise – unfortunately for them they can't lean as well as Jacko and fall down.

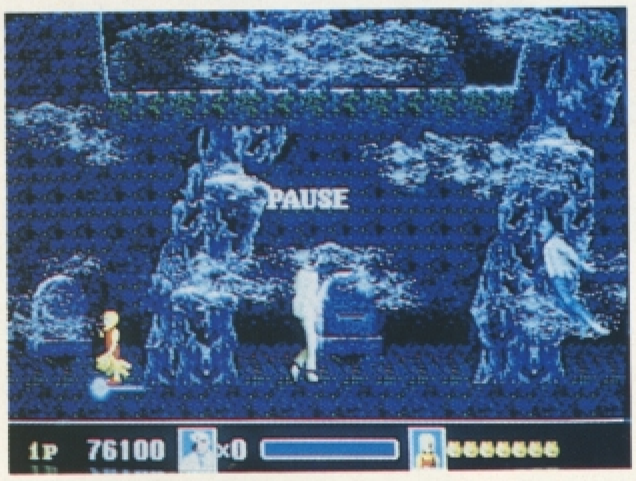




Only one way to put these guys in their place – just kick 'em in the goolies!

otherwise squeaky clean image are ladies of the street whose intentions are less than honourable. Personally, they could pollute me all they like.

In true Kung-fu Master style, Mike can kick and punch his way through the baddies with the kind of skill that even Bruce Lee would have been proud of. If a long distance strike is required, Jacko performs a quick spin and hurls his hat



***Thriller* had to be in there somewhere. Well, those Zombies need a couple of hits before they return to the grave.**

across the screen taking out any baddies that stand in its way.

Perhaps I'm being picky, but isn't the concept of young Michael being something of a hard case going a bit over the top? After all, everyone knows that – in the immortal words of Eddie Murphy – Mike ain't the most masculine guy in the world. Oh well, *Moonwalker* the film was nothing more than an ego trip for him, so why shouldn't the computer game be too?

Once Michael's kicked some hoodlum ass and released all the girlies on a particular sub-level, he is joined by his life-long friend, Bubbles the chimp (this guy really does have a serious problem!). Old Bubbles, possessing a slightly higher IQ than his master, points Michael in the direction of his enemy, Mr. Big. Once Mike arrives at Mr. Big's hiding place, he appears briefly to gloat at his challenger before quickly disappearing in a puff of smoke. But before he disappears, Mr. Big orders even more of his hoodlums onto Michael in a desperate attempt to stop him moonwalking all over his reign of terror. On later levels, these end of level baddies range from street punks to zombies and even rabid dogs.

Each level becomes progressively more difficult, as an increasing number of hoodlums close in on Michael. After a while, the action gets so frantic that you'll feel like defenestrating your joystick (that's my new word for the week safely inserted).

The game contains five levels, all of which are split up into several sub-levels. Each is based in a different location, taking inspiration from one of Michael's hit records. The first, which is set in a warehouse, is based around Mike's last single, *Smooth Criminal*, while later levels take inspiration from such songs as *Beat It, Thriller, Billie Jean* and *Bad*.

Moonwalker is simple enough, but that doesn't stop it from being a lot of fun. The game itself is a pretty tame rip-off of the classic coin-op *Elevator Action* minus the elevators, but there's a certain something in there that keeps you coming back for more. The combination of the boppy *Smooth Criminal* backing track, with the sampled sounds of Mike's high-pitched oooh-ing, makes for a highly polished game. *Moonwalker* isn't just a game for diehard Jacko fans – normal people may also want to play it.

THE VERDICT 91

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

CONSOLE CLASSIC

Konami/£26/Game Boy



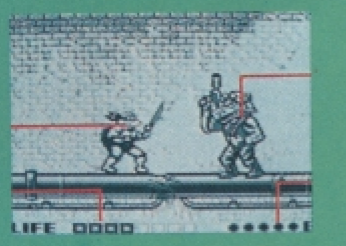
Cowabunga, dudes! We're back. And this time on your palm top portable, the Game Boy.

Like the Nintendo Entertainment System version reviewed a couple of issues back, you must guide the four pizza pickers in a half shell – Raphael, Donatello, Leonardo and Michaelangelo – along city streets and murky sewers to bring Shredder and his minions to their knees. Oh, and of course rescue April.



Boo, hiss, boo. It's Shredder.

You decide which of the turtles to control, pack enough pizza for the return journey and head for the highway. Along the way you'll meet foot soldiers, mousers, tubular transporters, Road-Kill Rodney and numerous other enemies.



It's Leonardo – Turtley mad as usual.

After mashing your way through countless city streets and sewers you'll encounter an end of level guardian like Be Bop, Rock Steady, Baxter Stockman, Krang and ultimately Shredder.

Occasionally an enemy will drop a slice or two of pizza after being walloped. Picking up pizza will partly replenish your power bar. If a turtle's power bar is completely depleted, he'll be captured and the next turtle must prepare for battle.

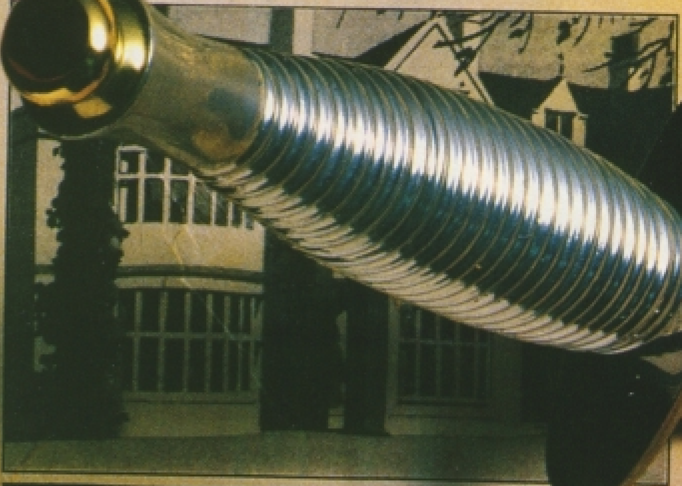
The graphics and sound effects are spectacular. The beat 'em up would be extremely mediocre if it wasn't for the astounding visuals and great stereo music track. This is certainly one cartridge you'll find hard to stop playing.

THE VERDICT 92

WE SET THE SCENE ... NOW YOU SOLVE THE ...

MURDER!

19TH JUNE 1941



'GHASTLEY MANOR' THE LOCATION OF HORRIFYING HOMICIDE

Police have today been informed of the murder of Mr Charles Innes, aged 46, an attorney from Barrington, W. Sussex.
It is believed Mr Innes was stabbed to death at the home of Mrs Audrey Broom-Hall, actress & widower of the famous film ...cer Sebastian Broom-Hall; who was holding a cocktail party for the rich & famous.
As one of the guests Lord Alfred Andrews has taken it upon himself to keep order at Ghastley Manor, he is ques...ing Mr Larry Glover, th... prominent political fig... & Dr Victor Jones: N... Scotland Yard have y... reach the scene of the c..., but they are esti... d to arrive at approx. 1... – 2 hours after the cr... was discovered.



DISTINGUISHED PEER HAS 2 HOURS TO FIND THE KILLER...!

Lord Alfred Andrews has only 2 hours to try and solve the murder of Mr Charles Innes who was attending a cocktail party at 'Ghastley Manor'.
He reports, "Things are not quite as I initially thought. The guests are entwined with love affairs, disputes over inheritance & outbursts of jealous rage."
Investigations continue.

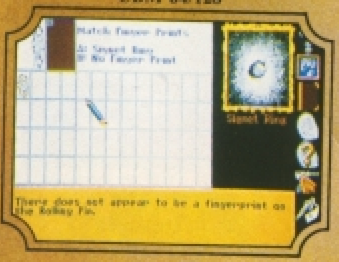


THE SCENE OF THE HORRENDOUS CRIME!

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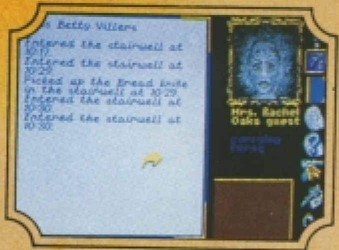


Atari ST

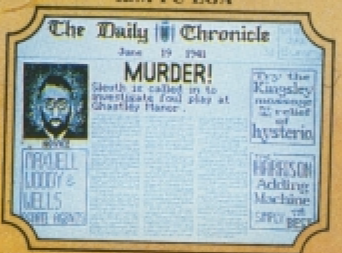
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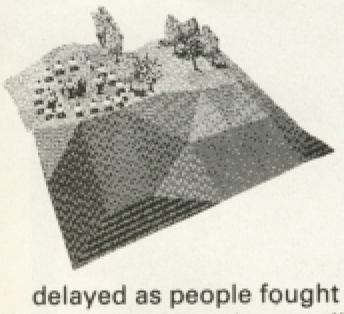
Amiga

COMPO

DESPOTLY SEEKING SONY



WIN A SONY MULTI DISC MIDI SYSTEM!
10 ELECTRONIC ARTS GOODIE BAGS!



Populous was one of the most popular games in the history of the eco system. Governments fell, continents were wiped out and trains were delayed as people fought to get a turn on the game. Now the equally fantastic sequel *Powermonger* has arrived and the world is set for another period of war, chaos and long waits at Didcot Parkway.

In order to celebrate the birth of a game that Dunc described as "ruddy brilliant" and by way of compensation to anyone stranded in Didcot, Electronic Arts have come up with a powerful prize.

POWERPRIZE

For the winner, there's a Sony system that's so powerful it makes other stereos look like shandy drinkers. The Sony 351 includes a twin cassette deck (with high speed dubbing), five disc multi-play CD, a 10-band graphic equaliser and... ooh, more things than we could mention on a page.

The 10 runners-up will be treated to some rather special Electronic Arts goodie bags, absolutely loaded down with mugs, T-shirts and all sorts of other EA fashion and lifestyle accessories.

A QUESTION OF POWER

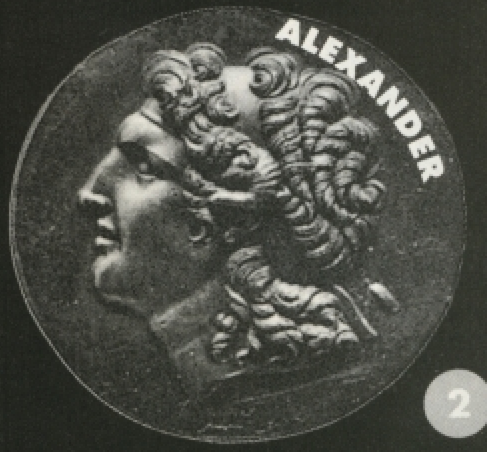
In *Powermonger* you get to do battle with some pretty evil megalomaniacs. Men whose aim is to overrun the world with fire, sword and crazy paving. If you're going to stand a chance against them, you'll need to be familiar with other great powermongers. (Well, you won't really, but we've got to find some link to hang this compo on.) So all you have to do is match the tyrant with his nickname.

Once you've done this, simply ring **(0898) 335 513** and read out the answers. For example if you think that Vlad was known as The Great then say "1C". Easy, isn't it? The call will only cost you 20p (you won't be able to spend any more 'cos you'll be cut off!) so it's cheaper than a stamp *and* you won't have to go out in the rain. (Unless you happen to keep your phone in the garden.)

STRICT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make sure you've got the permission of the bill-payer to use the phone.
2. Make sure you dial the right number. If someone asks you if you like being covered in warm tapioca pudding and... well, just you hang up.
3. Make very sure you state the answer and then your name and full address nice and clearly. Thank you.









A: THE MERCILESS
B: THE CONQUEROR
C: THE GREAT
D: THE IMPALER

RULES

- Any employees of EA or Dennis Publishing found entering this compo will be impaled.
- The Ed is Great so his decision goes.
- Entries received after 31st December 1990 will be ignored (mercilessly).

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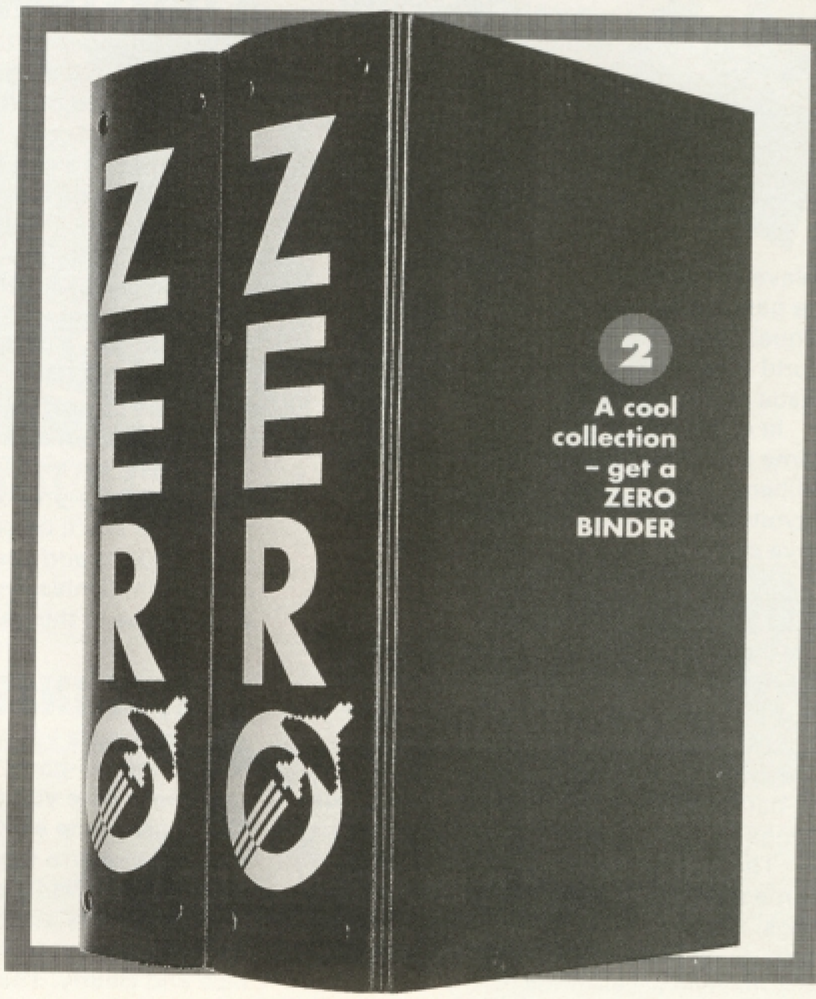
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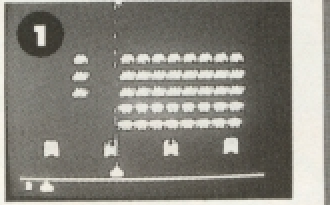
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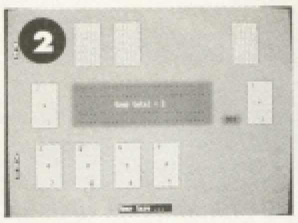
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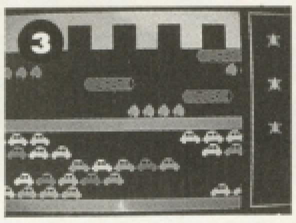
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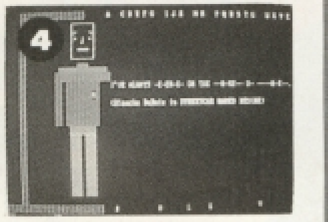
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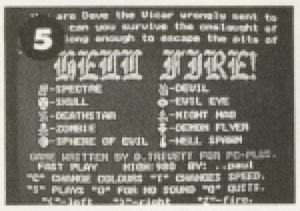
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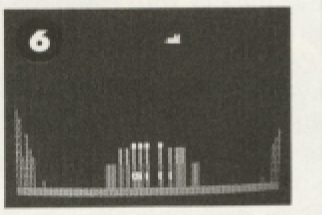










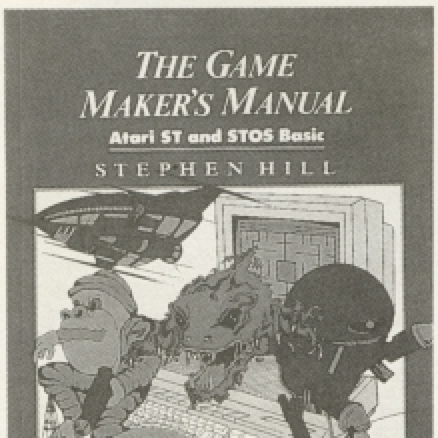


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ZERO 15



IT'S JUST TOO DAMNED GOOD TO BE TRUE!*

IN THE NEXT 'PACKED TO THE GILLS WITH XMAS GOODIES' ISSUE:

A **Cover Disk** of epic proportions (well, 3 and a half inches actually), featuring a complete game plus a playable demo – none of this 'crap disk and shame about the magazine too' stuff here!

Plus, even more stunning for those of a religious bent, the **free ZERO Advent Calendar!** Count down to Christmas with your fave mag! Whoooh yeah, now help me Jesus!

If you're a budding Duncan MacDonald, go and see a trained medical expert. Failing that, check out our exclusive **Fanzine Feature.** It's got all the info you'll need to put your own together!

And, of course, there'll be a complete **Review Round-up** of the few Christmas titles you ain't seen already in ZERO. All the biggies plus the best of the smallies in the crucial guide to 16-bit entertainment – ZERO.

ON SALE ON DECEMBER 6th WITH A LOVELY COVER-MOUNTED DISK AND AVAILABLE AT ALL DISREPUTABLE NEWSAGENTS!

The Publisher of ZERO reserves the right to change the contents of magazine and cover disk without notice because she's a bit unpleasant like that... (SLAP!) aargh! Sorry.

***Actually it *is* true – but don't wet yourself...**

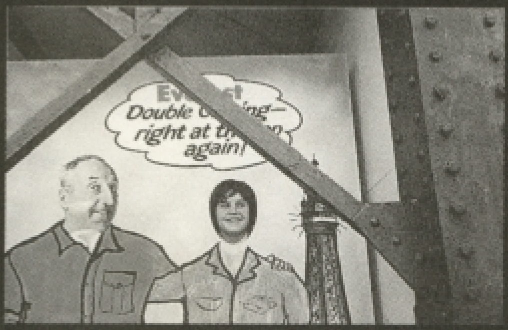
yikes!

THE READERS' PAGES

Send all your old crap to **Yikes! ZERO, Dennis Publishing, 14 Rathbone Place, London W1P 1DE** – there might even be a rather super free 'gift' in it for you (if we feel like it).

CLAIMS TO FAME

Only two Claims To Fame this month. One is rather brill and one is rather useless. See if you can guess which is which.



Taken five years ago, this entry shows Ben Knight of Hixon, Staffs next to a cardboard cut-out of slightly famous (but very dead) Double Glazing personality Ted "Fit The Best, Fit Everest" Moult. It was taken atop that stupid Eiffel Tower effort in Blackpool and the clever people who set the board up stuck it right behind those iron girders. Such an ideal place for photographs to be taken!



We've had two Duncan Goodhews but only one Jimmy Saville. Well, trumpets ahoy, because we've now got our second. He's with Chris Butler of Longswick in Aylesbury. Resplendent in Christopher Biggins glasses and tea-towel hat, Jimmy is (gasp) almost naked (yet again). What is it with this man? Spook!

♪ ALL THE HITS ♬ (AND MORE)

On The Alan P. Thorpe Show
(The disk jockey who's so crap that no radio station would touch him with a bargepole.)

R-r-r-rave it! Me again, Alan P. Thorpe, with the hottest tunes around. If you want to hear a hit then tune into my show. In fact it's more than just the Alan P. Thorpe "show" – it's the Alan P. Thorpe "experience". So r-r-r-rave up and get down on the floor while I put on *China In Your Hand* by Sade.

(*Put on* China In Your hand *by T'Pau. Ed.*)

Rave! That was Madonna by Betty Boo. Right, time for a phone-in. 071 243 1284's the number, Alan P. Thorpe's the name, and requests are the game. Hey, I'm quite good at those rhymey bits, aren't I? I'll do another one: Try this for size – I'm Alan P. Thorpe and, er, you could win a prize. Oh, I suppose that means I've got to do my competition now. Right, who wants to win a *Blue Peter* badge? I've got one here and I'm going to give it away. All you have to do is phone in and tell me who sung *China In Your Hand.* Okay, time for another happening slice of sound. It's Sonia by Big Fun.

(*Er, put on any Stock Aitken and Waterman record. Ed.*)

Hey, the phone's ringing. It'll be somebody after that *Blue Peter* Badge.

Alan: Hello. Hello?
Listener: Gazza Rap please, Alan.
Alan: No, that's not right.
Listener: Eh? Whaddya mean?
Alan: That's not the answer to my quiz.
Listener: I wasn't answering yer stupid quiz, man. That was me request!
Alan: Eh? Oh, a request. Um, you stumped me a bit there I'm afraid. Er...
(*Put on* Gazza Rap *by Paul Gasgoine. Ed.*)
Alan: Are you still there? ...



Sade



Gazza

Listener: Yeah? What now?
Alan: Well, did you want to have a go at the quiz?
Listener: Not particularly.
Alan: Oh, go on. Who sung *China In Your Hand*?
Listener: It was T'pau.
Alan: Aha! No, it was Betty Boo. You don't win I'm afraid, bye bye. (Click).

Right, this is the Alan P. Thorpe "experience", and I'm the jock with the, er, sock, Alan P. Thorpe. Time for another record from Black Box – it's *Party Atmosphere.* R-r-r-rave!

(*Put on* Fantasy *by Black Box. Ed.*)

That just about wraps it up for now, but next time I'm going to have a crack at another interview. The Derek Batey one might not have gone too well, but I've been practising in the bath. It's going to be me and the Queen mum (God bless her). I'll leave you with *Diamond Life* by T'pau.

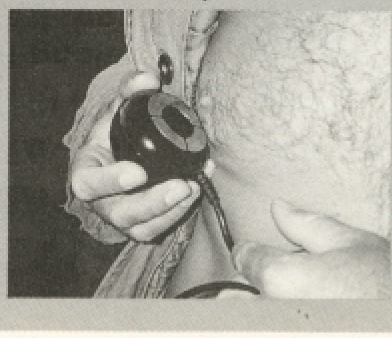
(*Put on* Diamond Life *by Sonia. Ed.*)

MOST *UNUSUAL* READER



Victor being strange in his garden...

Are you a bit odd? Here's someone who is – it's **Victor Sullivan** of Storrington – and he's prompted us to open up this one-off category. He sent in loads of bizarre photos of himself, some (gulp) with an animal (which we forwarded to *Beast!* magazine). He reckons, at 50, he's ZERO's oldest reader. And he says, "Someone is offering me and my wife *Bomber* cut-price. Any info?" Yes. It's crap. Don't touch it with a bargepole.



Victor doing something even stranger to his right nipple...

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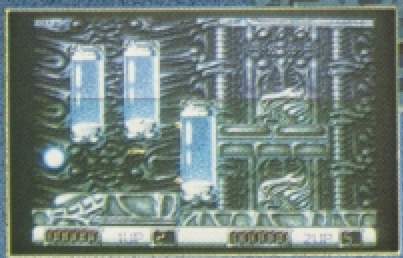
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Z-OUT



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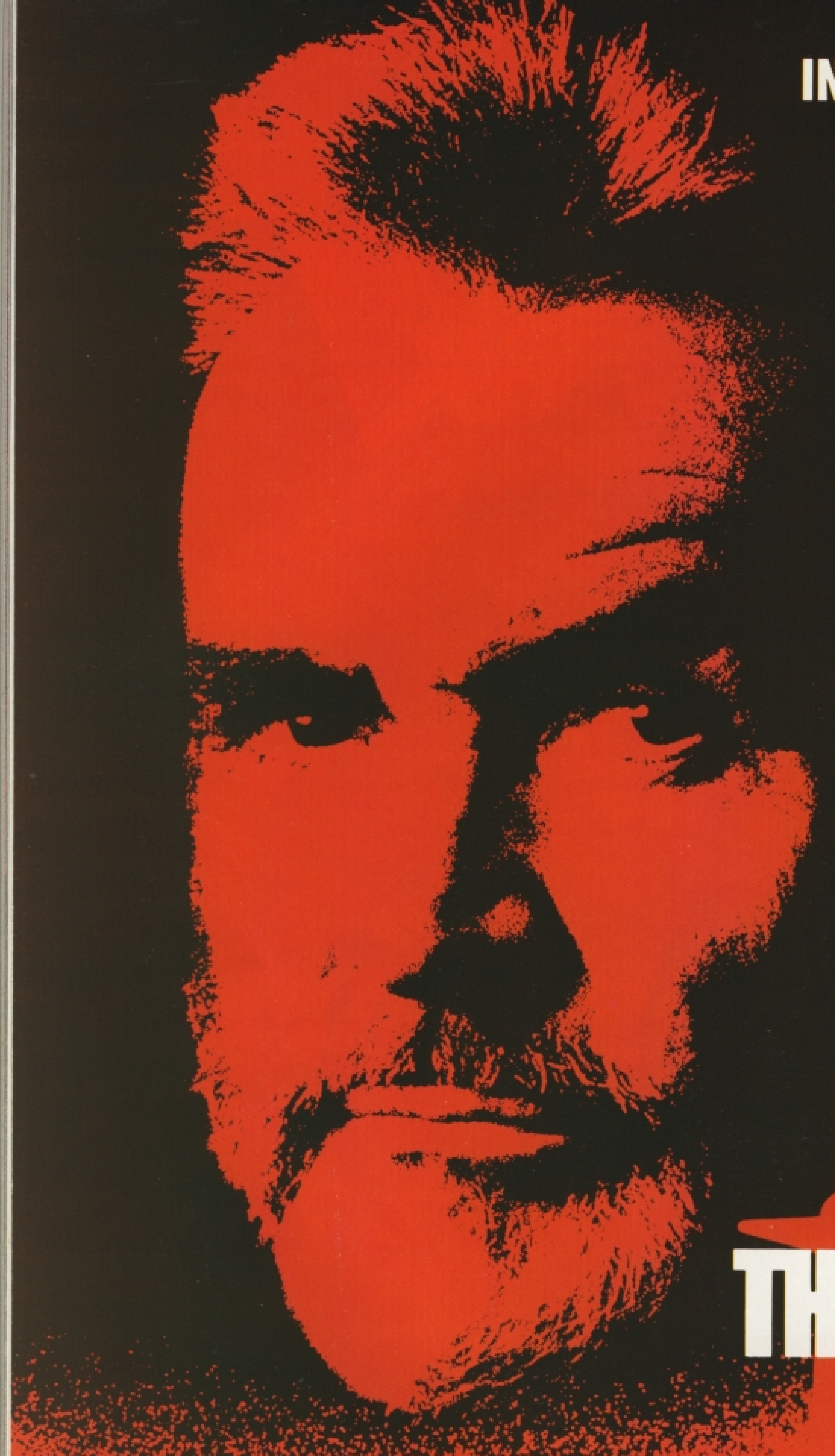
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BLACK SHAPE

The Alternative Letters Page

Eeeeooooowww! Ha ha! I've just been turned on to the joys of Scalextric racing. It's amazing, there you are, zooming along the track in your little Ferrari, when all of a sudden – "graunch!" Your car stops dead. It's reached a rusty bit of track. So you push it on a bit with your finger and off it goes. Then "graunch" again. Another crap bit of track. And then another. And then another. Talk about realism – it's just like being Nigel Mansell.

Dear Black Shape,
Hello. I've just written to say I'm getting an ST for Christmas (jingle bells, jingle bells, jing until the cows come home). Yes, you're quite right, I am a bit of a Mr. Thomas for reading your mag when I haven't got a 16-bit machine yet, but it doesn't matter, because I'm completely kwawah!
Petër "Crave" Turner
No Fixed Abode
● *Yes – the lights are on and there's someone a bit weird at home. But that doesn't concern me: what I want to know is why do "green" scientists say that wind power is an inexhaustible supply of energy, when it's blatantly obvious to anyone with a quarter of a brain that if trillions of windmills are stuck up all over the world, eventually the planet's "breeze supply" will be used up? Answer me that.* **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape,
Back in issue ten you kindly allowed us to identify your "genitalia" by wearing a condom. I recently showed this to my mother and her comment was: "It's not a very tight fit, is it?". And I had to admit that it did look a little on the large size for you. Could it be possible that a great Shape such as yourself feels it necessary to lie in the chemist about the size he requires merely to save embarrassment or impress the shopkeeper?
Marcus White
Loudwater, Bucks
● *Look, it was a very cold day – alright?? But back to this windmill thing, it's true, isn't it? I mean, all this high pressure/low pressure, cold front/warm front stuff that John Kettley's always blithering on about is a load of old guff. Wind is (and always has been, passed on by a sort of knock on "domino effect", and once it's all been used up that'll be that. No more wind. It's pretty worrying.* **Black Shape.**

Dear B.S.
This sixth form job is a lark! Only three or four lessons a day and then you can go home for the rest. Spankadelic is what I say. And guess what? They give us 500 sheets of lovely paper so I can write to ZERO loads of times. I think I'll go and write a letter to T'zer now.
L. Ledbury
Wantage, Oxon

● *Well, if you've got so much spare time on your hands then maybe you can join in the fight to find a real alternative, non-pollutive, power source to oil. As I've explained, wind power is out of the question as there's only a finite supply (unless we can somehow "import" it from one of the other planets). Actually, Jupiter would be a good candidate – you could have some sort of really long interstellar pipe.* **Black Shape.**

Shapey,
I'm just dropping you a line to try and dissuade you from letting your magazine follow the same path which many lesser magazines have trodden. Please don't start printing articles on the Queen mum. I know we all love her and that, and what with it being her ninetieth year we want to show our appreciation for what she's done for us all. I just don't think that a 16-bit computer magazine is the right place for this kind of thing. Thank you for listening and I'm sure that if you think about it you'll realise that I'm right and that it's best for us all in the long run.
John Shelley
Buckingham, Bucks
● *Like you say, it's true that we all love her to bits. I know I do. What an adorable old bat. And don't forget, if it wasn't for the Queen mum we wouldn't have won the Second World War – she made all the 'common people' feel alright about having their houses destroyed during the blitz. She's a star, and because of that we may be forced to do a feature on her. Sorry, but it can't be helped.* **Black Shape.**

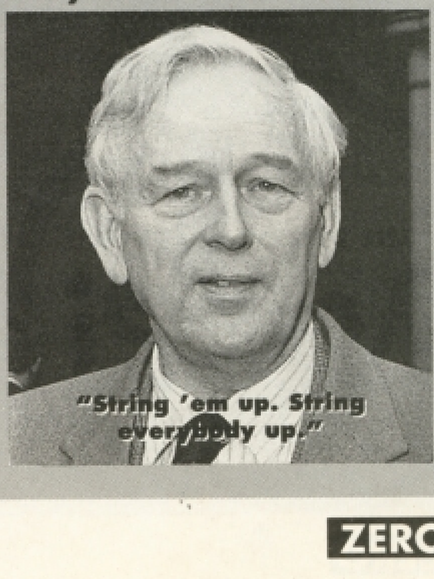
Black Shape,
Here is how to pickle walnuts. Use fresh green walnuts. Shell them and prick them with a steel fork. Soak in strong brine for seven days, stirring well two or three times daily. Repeat for a second week in fresh brine. Drain, and spread your nuts in the sun to dry. When black, pack in convenient jars and cover with spiced vinegar. They're great served with cheese.
Ben Murray
Maida Vale, London

● *Yes, and they're possibly an alternative power source to fossil fuels as well. I followed your recipe and discovered, during the second week of soaking, that they give off a very small electrical charge – 18 walnuts produced enough power to kill a ladybird. A little bit more research and we could have a solution to a global problem. Here's to Walnut Power!* **Black Shape.**

Dear Black Shape,
How dare you. Of all the low down dirty tricks. I am of course referring to the badge I sent you, the now infamous Hyndburn Transport Bus Watch badge. I sent you that badge out of the goodness of my heart and the next thing I know Alan P. Thorpe is using it as a prize.
Kevin "Dave Swann Rides Again" Buchanan
Accrington, Lancs
● *Share and share alike, I always say. Alan needs all the help he can get – he's so crap there's no way he'd ever have any prizes at all if I didn't field them and pass them on – for instance, I was sent that* Blue Peter *badge this month from Stuart Reid in Fife. Alan usually loses everything in the end anyway, so it's unlikely your Bus Watch badge will be going to anybody else. (Or the* Blue Peter *badge for that matter.)* **Black Shape.**

THE VOICE OF REASON

By Norris McWhirter



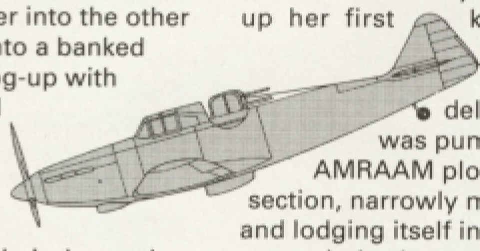
"String 'em up. String everybody up."

*i.e. even more crap than usual

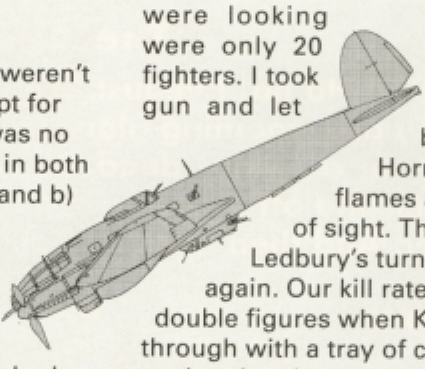
MAD DOG FIGHTER ACE

I'm back! Safe and sound after being shot down over Saudi by American fighters who mistook the Mad Dog Airways plane for an Iraqi Mig 29. We gave 'em a run for their money, though, bagged at least eight of the blighters before losing control. It was brilliant.

The first we knew of their presence was when the left engine was blown apart by an AMRAAM, sending shrapnel into the passenger compartment. I instantly kicked full power into the other engine, stuck the crate into a banked dive and had a quick snog-up with Kate, the bikini clad hostess. After we'd finished, I pulled out of the dive (at 30,000 feet) and shouted through to the rear-gunners to pull their damned fingers out and start firing back. Mrs Ledbury (stewardess three, and demon tea-maker) yelled back that there weren't any rear-gunners left alive – except for Pinky "Spoons" Pickering, who was no use anyway, as a) he'd been shot in both arms over Tunisia on the way in, and b) he was hiding in the loo.



I ordered Mrs Ledbury to take the gunner position and give it all she had. She did, and within seconds an F-16 was spiralling earthwards. Plucky Mrs L had notched up her first kill. Navigator Otto, Kate and Paul the co-pilot yelled with delight: the adrenalin was pumping. Then a second AMRAAM ploughed into the tail section, narrowly missing Mrs Ledbury and lodging itself in the toilet cubicle. It was a dud – there was no explosion, but Pinky Pickering sustained a broken leg. I left Paul in charge of the controls and made my way through the injured and dying passengers to the rear of the BAC 1-11. Kate asked if she could do anything, so I told her to make some coffee.



Reaching the back of the plane I scanned the surrounding sky. Things were looking good – there were only 20 circling fighters. I took control of the gun and let off a quick burst at a F-18 Hornet. It burst into flames and dropped out of sight. Then it was Mrs Ledbury's turn, then mine again. Our kill rate was almost into double figures when Kate staggered through with a tray of coffees and told us that the plane was out of control and that Otto and Paul had been fatally wounded. So that was that. We bailed out. Kate and I shared parachute one, while Pinky and Mrs Ledbury shared parachute two. After a heavy landing (Pinky broke his other leg) we hitched a lift to the British embassy and, well, the rest is history. As I said at the beginning – I'm back, safe and sound. As are Kate, Pinky and Mrs Ledbury. What a wizard jaunt. Who's coming on the next one?

HIGHEST JOYSTICK IN THE WORLD

Going up? Don't forget to take John Inman, a joystick and a camera with you. Any kind of joystick and camera – but try and get the shot in focus, will you? Oh, and you don't really have to take John Inman along – it was just a sort of 'joke' that wasn't actually very funny. Ahem. And don't forget – even if you're not going "up", you can still send pics of Joysticks In Unusual Places.

● Take one Ben Nevis, balance another Ben Nevis on top of it and you're still a couple of thousand feet short of the new record set by **Michael Smith** of Marlow. He snapped his joystick on a mountain in Aspen, Colorado and sent the picture to us, enclosing proof of the height, which was somewhere around the10,500 feet mark. So, the new land-based record holder he is then! Top hole! Climb higher than that if you can.



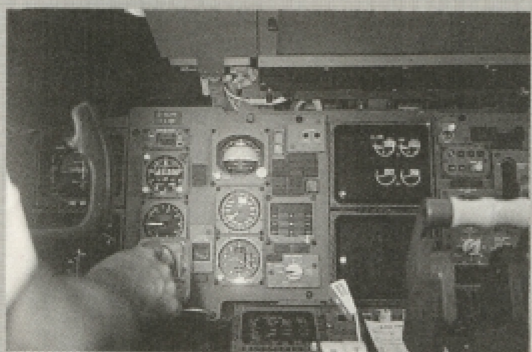
● Compared to the Colorado pic, this one of **Mathew Galvin** on top of Snowdon (3560 feet) suddenly seems utterly, utterly pathetic. So pathetic that we wouldn't have put it in – were it not for the fact that



Mathew looks so completely knackered that we felt a bit sorry for him. Huh – these shandy drinkers. (And he probably got the train up there anyway.)

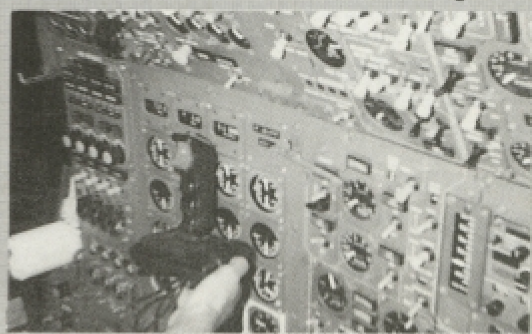
● Onto the aircraft aided category and we have **David Furlong** of Letchworth with this entry: "My dad's a Britannia Airways pilot and we flew to Cyprus. I took my joystick and we went up to 37,000 feet. I told my dad this altitude was for shandy-men, so he went higher for me. Here's my Competition Pro at 41,000 feet!"

Unfortunately, David actually misses



out on the record, for two reasons: a) His father's B 767 cockpit is a bit messy for our liking (too many wires sticking out), and b) the next day another entry popped through our letterbox...

● **Alan Wright** of Southport writes : "Not just the highest joystick in the world, but the fastest. The altimeter was reading





54,700 feet and the in-cabin machometer was reading mach 2.0." He continues, "They do have some stunning stewardesses on Concorde, even if the caviar is a little on the salty side." Judging by the photo, we'd say that they had some rather *blurred* stewardesses on Concorde. But caviar, eh? Better than the couple of olives you get on normal crap planes.

STOP PRESS: Can't afford a holiday to Colorado or a trip on an airliner? Don't worry, there's a new category, **Joysticks In The Most Untidy Room Imaginable.** Any room you like – as long as it's disgustingly scumbaggish you'll stand a chance. Fag-ends all over the place make a good start. The rest is up to you...

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GIVE OR TAKE

This is the section of the mag where you can flog all those dodgy computers from yesterdecade. And if you want to tell people that you're looking for a penpal or you need something old and grey – and I don't mean your Gran – then this, your section, is for you. If your girlfriend has given you the push and you'd like someone else in your life, then advertise your heart to the world. Oh, and by the way – if you're going to sell pirate games, then be warned – my Gran's got a lethal left hook. Ooch, Gran. Anyway, since we're short of cash, we'll dob you in to F.A.S.T. and collect the dosh...

HARDWARE

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● Oi, Posti! Get off that bloody computer! Lots of love from Kate.

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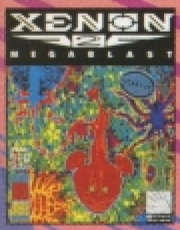

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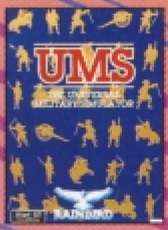
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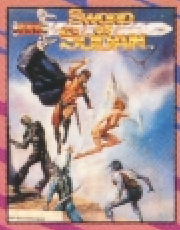
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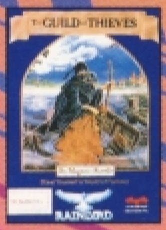


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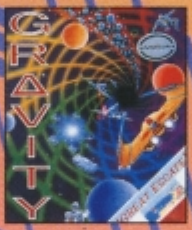

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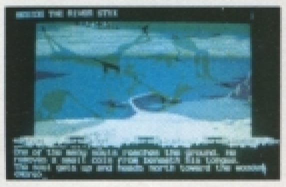


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